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EASTERN LIGHT *of* SANĀTĀN CULTURE

BY

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*“Man is man, machine is machine
And never the twain shall wed”*

—TAGORE

I dedicate this
book to my beloved
Child Her Highness
Sri Urmilla Devi
Maharani Sahiba
of Nekha, whose
gentle & sincere
devotion to her
earthly father in-
spired me to write
these few pages.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W.B." followed by a stylized surname.

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PREFACE

THE object of writing these few pages is in an attempt to give, however brief, an outline of the Sanātan cultural beliefs, some of those conspicuously outstanding landmarks in the life-story of the East and India, which would give the reader an idea of the mould of the Hindu mind in particular and the Eastern temperament in general.

It is meant to convey, perhaps unsuccessfully, a pen-picture not only to the generally ignorant outsider but also to our own young men, born and bred under the direct actinic ray of the tropics with the resultant temperamental psychology of the emotional and sentimental Souls.

Dictatorial Nature has willed the Eastern temperaments with distinct Eastern peculiarities not to alter under changing times and circumstances. Top varnishes and paints may be applied to any people but the inner Souls of men carry with them strong strains of imbibed ancestral heritage, which generally refuses to be obliterated.

The need of writing this arose from the fact that young men today, under the present defective educational system, are denied the benefit of their own natural ancestral treasures of Eastern Religious Spirituality. In fact, all educations bereft of religious tuition can, at no time, be accepted as friends of man for his true self, the Soul and Spirit of humanity. For, it must never be forgotten that all Religions unquestionably possess the cream of human brain, the highest mental achievement of all peoples and their precious cultures. It is also a fact that, from this valuable accumulated reservoir, race consciousness and distinct peculiarities of the East as well as of the West are born, which put the men of India under the head of Eastern people.

The most nourishing and easily assimilated dietary to life for natural healthy growth is always provided by Mother Nature in the immediate surroundings, like the mother's milk to the offspring. Indigenous dietary also answers, with satisfactory results, the quest of the scientific medical researcher. Artificial foods may be laboriously and scientifically prepared, but they can never successfully compete with the natural. The same law must apply

to the healthy growth of the mental body of man.

Modern times have definitely brought about scarcity of the essential Eastern spiritual foods, without which, like the physical, the mental body cannot prosper if lacking in important vitamins of Eastern Spirituality. Hence this attempt to meet the deficiency, in however small a way, of the vital mental foods.

Some may feel diffident to agree with the above-mentioned conclusions, but time and experience will bear out the right answer, mysteriously hidden in the womb of the unknown future. It will not be correct to say that temporary changed dietary or chemical vitamins, to aid occasional reconditioning of the elemental body, are not beneficial but it is difficult to believe that medical food can ever replace the natural. Unerring Nature provides all essentials to the physical and mental lives for peoples the world over, and will continue to do so in the days to come.

Through the vast age of evolution experience has unmistakably taught us that all attempts in bygone days to finally subjugate man's inherent foundational Nature have failed and little or no hope is entertained by all thinking

men that the machine age of today will conquer over man, his inborn nature and his *root of existence—Spirit and Spirituality*.

In the pages of this little book, I have purposely missed even important quotations from the sacred Scriptures to avoid it becoming sectarian and have, therefore, attempted to write with a wider look of a cosmopolitan nature, so that all may read it without offence and with benefit of universal truths, which pervade through all Religions in one form or another.

It is true, I have instinctively used the Sanātan cultural backgrounds for this little book, because I am nurtured in them and can best understand and express them. By so doing, truths are not altered in the same way as water does not alter if the Hindus call it '*jala*', the Moslems call it '*pāni*' or '*āb*' or it is called 'water'. It retains the same qualities under changed names, so also convincing truths remain unaltered under the skies of the West, the Middle East and the Far East.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL ASPECT

HINDU religion, as a whole, is that enigmatic subject which rightly baffles the keenest imagination of all outsiders and has also sadly led astray thousands and hundreds of thousands of the present-day youths with inevitable tragic mental chaos of thought and action, socially and religiously.

This all-important item of Religion to mankind has, to the Hindu, become delicately intricate today under the veneer of modernity. The well-tried Sanātan Religion was primarily designed to satisfy the cravings of man's Soul, with such varied temperaments, to help all variety to devote the mighty energy of the human mind, logically and philosophically, on to one of the many conceivable aspects of the One Perfect Being of God Almighty and the Creator. In the

same way as a man, with many friends and relations, has to present himself, differently mannered and attired, to satisfy individual and varied tastes, so also His understandable aspect differs to suit individual varied tastes. Like a man again, who, under each changed dress and manner, does not himself change with his changed dresses, so also He remains unchanged under all different aspects.

The dire need arose of this elaborate expression of many complete aspects of the One to satisfy the vast and varied field of human imagery and to fulfil the supreme necessity of avoiding the greatest curse to humanity of atheism which would have gradually spread in the majority otherwise.

The most intelligent, obstinate and inquisitive creature on earth is man. Any lack of due regard to this unerasable fact in human life would always defeat all aims to establish faith in God and, therefore, in Religion. Wise reasoning would counsel to provide as liberal a menu as can be *conceivably* logical to appease the quest

of fastidious hunger of human intellect, and thus preserve the invaluable theistic faith in God for man's greatest good and happiness. Modern age plays on emotions and passions only, completely ignoring the finer side of Religious Spirituality, which alone harnesses correctly the prized human spiritual intelligence; and the damaging potent danger is that, if undisciplined emotions are allowed to prosper without a wise and logical guide, they will assuredly subjugate high intelligence, most needed for spiritual uplift.

The most liberal wide field of Religion and the delicate and complicated pattern, designed by the Maharsis, the great Hindu teachers, has today become a difficult subject without the aid of very good exponents and accepted teachers, subtle and full of seeming complications.

And yet, Religions remain the greatest need of mankind for all times, because they alone contain the undying truths of priceless treasures of man. It is because of this solid fact, that the greatest need for the good of human species has

always been felt of deep appreciation and understanding of those unmatched gems from the Scriptures. Therefore, if such an important subject to learn is unaided by right tuition, it is definitely put just beyond the reach of ordinary intellect. As an instance, the major heads of Karma (Action), Upāsanā (Devotion or Love) and Gyāna (Knowledge) aim at the same target of the ultimate perfection of the three great ideals but their roads of approach, to the layman, seem definitely foreign to one another. While they are all designed for the real progress and uplift of man, their progressive strides are so different at times, that they appear in distinct contrast to one another during their progressive journey on the three principal paths. Is it to be wondered then, that so many find it really difficult to recognise them during those periods of progress as belonging to the same family?

The layman's intellect is naturally fogged and puzzled. He loses his way easily in this ungodly complex of modern life and is sadly

compelled to walk on obscure roads, dark with suspicion and lack of real faith.

Such conditions are a severe handicap and will hopelessly compromise real progress, when we realise that the knowledge-giving torches are in the hands of so many incompetent men in the priest class, who are themselves incapable of dispelling the darkness with the light of reason, real wisdom and understanding. This sad state of affairs has been reached, primarily by the shortcomings of right tuition of Sacred Religions.

Over and above this, the teachers themselves have also been criminally victimised by the terrible modern human weakness of greed and selfishness, so many of them ever ready to wrongly interpret truths for considerations of money.

The fact is that Truth exists in Religions but by selfish interested priest class it is obscured by narrow dogmas. True Religion exists to serve God, but perverted interpretations by selfish greedy teachers try to make God serve them.

Such teachers teach men to do nothing themselves, nor to abstain from doing anything wrong. Men are allowed to do anything they wish to do without even loving God and all that is needed for Salvation will be done by such teachers, and they thus conveniently begin to like and follow those dogmas more than the Truths in Sacred Religions, and thus unconsciously become lovers of narrow sects only and finally end up by loving themselves better than all else.

In Hindu India, the teacher class has always been a very special class, which, under all circumstances, is expected never to brook to the baser material unclean considerations and should always keep clean and high, the most precious spiritual achievement of mankind for all times, the holy path of the knowledge and approach to the Almighty Father.

With this definite set-back to the real progress, some fusion of understanding in the warring human intelligence and passionate emotions of the present age will have to be discovered and

we will have to solemnly resolve that we shall again re-establish human relationship with the Creator alone and unseat the seemingly almighty Mammon from the position he threatens to occupy. We dare not allow this fateful fungus to grow, for if left unattended to, it will assuredly eat its way deep into our very morals, the vital fibre, to the unquestioned detriment and disgrace of the real greatness of humanity and mankind.

Modern thought is callously inattentive to this great truth in human life. The entire mental energies today are focussed to the worship of the God of Wealth, and so long as material prosperity is assured anyhow, neglect and unholy compassion is shown to the irregular and irresponsible fast lives the majority of fashionable youths take to, in the knowledge and presence of parents and teachers. This unpardonable neglect in the most impressionable age of the life-span by all the guardians is, then, conveniently explained away as the inevitable result of youth, which is not correct because the real cause is the early

spiritual corruption due to criminally careless watch by the guardians and the absence of religious tuitions of value.

It is generally in that clean virulent age of glorious youth, the world over, perhaps more emphasized under the rays of the tropics in the Eastern peoples, when the heart is so full of candour, uncalculated spontaneous happiness, receptive and prepared to complete sincerity, that the aid of right guidance is most essential because it is the correct period of laying the foundations in the Soul's structure of the life-span. In such a virile and pulsating state, opportunity and danger continually stand on either side of the being for or against him.

In that stage, when the Soul is so highly sensitive, susceptible emotions are continually aroused, powerful and passionate waves are so often potent enough to ruthlessly disturb the otherwise calm human intellect to stormy scenes and, then, it is difficult under the tidal wave of youth to clearly discriminate if the being is filled

with happiness or sadness. In that whirlpool of passionate emotions, irresponsible acts are resorted to, which make or mar the entire future of the life-span.

When we take full account of this exciting story of youth, we cannot but own that the importance of religious tuition to control and guide are of inestimable value for the being's happiness in the life-span.

There is yet another cause which has strongly helped to bring about this state of affairs and is outstandingly conspicuous, the blind galloping advance of crude and lifeless materialism with tragic results of starvation amongst plenty.

The word 'starvation' rightly caters for all, because in this machine age there is a very large number of men in the world who have been thrown out of employment by the machine, and are thus materially starved and, again, there are so many intellectuals, who perforce have to live in this machine age and are spiritually starved, since all modern advance of material machine

age has completely failed and deliberately ignored to measure and weigh the innermost cravings of the Soul's Spirit, its many essential vibrations of emotion and sentiment and all those precious spiritual feelings which make life worth living, simply because in materialism all remote traces of Spirituality are totally absent. On the whole, therefore, the majority of mankind has been compelled to pass its days in an unquestioned mental agony of both kinds.

Under the present circumstances, men are helpless to forge their futures and, therefore, cannot hope to lay down and follow a programme for the satisfaction of the undying Soul's final aims. The modern workers are mentally drunk with the machine age with a mad passion for aimless speed, mass productions to the accompaniment of the unnatural and insincere slogans of equality, liberty and fraternity as only clap-trap slogans and words, really unconvinced themselves on hard visible facts, in this glaringly diversified Creation. All these slogans are

merely for lip-service only, for otherwise the modern man's thoughts are constantly directed solely on to new material discoveries for money's sake only without any provision for the Soul-lifting aims which, to mankind, should unerringly be its final target, senselessly hoping, with the aid of this ceaseless tiring exertion, to procure for mankind the coveted stage of mental peace and happiness. But, with this unwise programme, *that most prized commodity* recedes further and further away from the world of today. The list of mental privations and powerful inner discords, of the youth and the old, would be worth summing up with comparative analogies in longevity, general health etc., to say, only fifty or a hundred years ago. The inventors of steam, electric and atomic energies never dreamt of the misuse that we apply them for.

CHAPTER II

CONTRAST

WHAT is to be done, is the biggest and the most important question that challengingly affronts mankind today.

The end of the present global war will doubtless multiply more new machines and mechanical inventions to further material prosperity only. *Will these new material gains answer the inner call of the Spirit?* The Soul, which habitually yearns for something else, something which is not made of matter and which cannot be touched either by the most delicate machines or even by the material body, without the real peace and happiness of which the entire material glitter fades into complete insignificance—the Spiritual Peace, the real *reconcilement of Mind, Heart and Spirit*—will always be the unqualified treasure of mankind, and in the absence of which man can

never hope for even a trace of lasting contented happiness.

The age-long recorded and unrecorded human history has told us only one story repeatedly, and that is that man has ceaselessly laboured for Religious and Spiritual Peace in various lands in so many ways because it *alone* caters for the precious human Soul in different ways, and if this ideal should once again form the final aim of human species after so many heart-rending and repeated failures of the present world to establish a real peaceful world, then we shall have to gather all the man's courage to cast off the painful shackles of modern society, the many garments of falsehood from every walk of life, and honestly attempt to retrieve even those who unwisely imagine and perpetuate those foundationless beliefs of winning the precious peace of the Soul with heartless materials only.

The highly dubious commonplace slogans of advance, reforms, progress, unmistakably focused solely on the material side only, definitely

denote nothing in any concrete shape because it is impossible even to attempt to measure any honest Soul-lifting human activities, aimed at sublime finality, with these ambiguous measure-tapes.

True human gain can be honestly declared correct only if the Soul's achievement of humanity and goodness, with the sure background of Religious Spirituality, is safely banked for daily use and the surplus material achievements and discoveries of science and machines are added to those high ideals without attempting to usurp, by-pass or trample over real human Spirituality and thus only a larger treasure, in fact, is at the man's disposal for healthy human consumption, eventually to guide him on to the sublime godly paths of goodness and honest humanity—the real mother of a happy world.

Today, unfortunately, such is not the so-called modern advance. Instead, all the tried wisdoms, accepted correct through a tremendous age and experimented experiences, proved to be

truly valuable to mankind because they have all along helped man's higher evolution as distinct from the animal world, are ignored by modernity, where social laws, hygienic laws concentrated into customs, economic laws, laws of State and above all Religion itself which, according to every human tenet in all ages, has been unconditionally accepted as the life-blood of the human soul and of humanity, are foolishly replaced by foundationless ideals of modern advance, advocated by selfish, ignorant, irreligious amateurs in this mad rush for a new world in the futile hope of producing a new system of a peace-giving evolution to mankind and his pure Spirit through the callous material means only.

Thus, an illogical impossibility is attempted to satisfactorily feed the Spirit of man, his real indestructible and everlasting Self, a non-material entity, by unspiritual and lifeless materials and machines only.

With this ideal, organised mechanical programmes have been put in motion to capture and

imprison the entire human species, aided by modern mechanical laws which are so divorced from the great Religions and succeeding only in freeing man from important human moralities with the many codes of honour that have alone *given mankind its laboured prestige* in this vast Creation.

Utter failures, disasters, painful experiences are daily noticed. But the modern progress-
sionist is totally blind to the causes that are multiplying man's mental miseries. He is deter-
mined to work on his own lines which, in the end, are designed for the total expulsion of the yearn-
ing for mental peace, *a prized peace*, which the entire world, unknowingly but with an inborn instinct, is ceaselessly trying to procure under modernity by a wrong road.

Brutal wars, callous exploitations, deceits at all corners, lying propaganda, animal hatreds, rank insincerities, unspiritual godless educational programmes, base moralities and unblushing atheism—in fact, all that stifles the nobler and

higher side of man, which alone puts him above the lower creation—are daily smilingly practised in the name of civilisation and the civilised men closing their eyes to the debauched conditions modernity presents today.

What hope man can thrive on, with this picture daily repeated in the world-cinema of today, because those that can help and guide carelessly watch the disastrous future, unmoved!

There are many highly intellectual men in modern times who have devoted their mental energies to the modern machine age only and have sadly forgotten one thing of essential importance and that is 'the Owner of the Hand' that has created them with the rest of the Universe and is, in fact, the only power which can preserve them, the Almighty Father and His wishes through the Religious Scriptures.

In the modern School of Thought, it is senselessly shocking to see and try to believe that man's happiness is created by material circumstances. Happiness depends, not on any external

causes, but only upon our relations to external causes. Modern science has ignored the inborn higher faculties and is attempting to hypnotise the masses into believing that the study of the laws, which govern lower aspects of man, of self-preservation and reproduction, constitutes the whole knowledge. Spiritual side of man is flagrantly ignored and this has sadly appeared in our lives because modern man has *discarded the belief of Providence's interferences in human affairs* and has absurdly substituted it with the concept of material power only.

This fateful forgetfulness of Him and His laws, through the Great Religions, is having its repercussions of an injurious type on the lives of mankind because the lessons, given by the mysterious Mighty Hand in the shape of so many mishaps, individually and collectively, are not producing satisfying results. The modern prophet's motto is 'take no lesson from disasters and multiplying miseries of all kinds and cheaply pass over such incidents as mere unforeseen accidents,

in which his hands are spotlessly clean'. He is totally unmoved by the picture of mankind presented before his eyes, where the definite lowering of human merit is clearly visible. He delights to revel in his obstinate vanity and has the courage to invariably believe his co-workers and himself to be only doubtful seconds to the Creator.

The only result, under such conditions, is apparent to all. The world of today cannot honestly be termed as a happy world and, why, after so long an evolutionary period, have we reached this tragic irresponsible stage? The answer in India is not difficult to seek. It is entirely due to a real famine of spiritual foods to mankind where modern mechanical laws have replaced His laws conveyed through Scriptural truths.

Religion is not only precious by itself but presents, in individuals and peoples, countless excellences in their character and all human moral laws because man, the individual, after all,

is the combination of Spirit and Matter and, in this marvellous creature of Nature, rides the Monarch of the being, the Undying Soul, which is essentially an intellectual Spirit (or Chaitanya Ātmā) and not Matter.

Such glaring truths are totally ignored by the modernist, where Spirit and Spirituality should legitimately lead the entire Creation instead of lifeless matter and machine which can only debase mankind inspite of the modern socialist, who has finally closed his search of man after contacting the outer skin. This glaring truth is totally ignored by the modernist. He takes no heed of this living fact in Creation. He is bent on his material programmes only, never thinking of the spiritual foods which are getting scarce as time goes on.

Speculative men are intensely alarmed at this frightening picture of the so-called advance in which he can discern systematic designs, in all its many material activities, to bring about spiritual starvation, bent on driving the unwilling

mankind to commit the supreme criminal folly of spiritual human suicide.

Excepting the casuals, all thinking men shudder to look at the future picture of man. If, unfortunately, we fail to retrieve the lost position of man's greatness, what will the future picture of man be like? It will be a crowd of beings only, for, to the ear and the eye, they will definitely present a more obnoxious picture than many animals of the so-called lower creation.

But the modernist is tough-skinned, short-sighted and illogical in a breathless haste to multiply his mass production, material machines, and he takes unaffected pride in his leadership by physical brute force only, ignoring the finer side of Soul's Spirit and constantly indulging in his chosen, care-free material dreams. He is falsely proud of his physical man's shape and is unerringly bold always to address himself and his kind, in all utterances and writings with the sacred title of a 'human being' with a capital 'H' unconcerned and unmoved at the dirty picture

modern population presents today. There are few, if any, important fields left, where the modern expert has not disgraced himself.

The self-conscious Souls believe that this state of affairs has definitely reached a climax point and even the patient and compassionate Father is taking a severe notice of the ills that mankind is daily multiplying. Consequently, He has let loose the dogs of such callous wars, twice in twenty-five years, and these wars have carried, in their wake, as they have done in the past, all the miserable privations that such folly of mankind invites. It is no exaggeration to say that no corner of the world has escaped the tragic consequences of the modern man's wars, where chivalry of soldiery is absent and all acknowledged clean soldier's fight is scarce, where the tenets of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata are totally ignored and the shadows of the great Crusaders of the West are unrecognisable in the armies of today.

All the powerful faculties of the human brain

are turned in one direction and one only, and that is the ceaseless multiplying material inventions, ruthless in character of the destruction of the fellow-being, at all costs, callously sacrificing human laws which discriminate him from the rest and give man his greatness, where women, children, sick and the wounded and even the driven destitutes from their homes are not spared by the mechanical ogre of the modern war-machine, driven on, year after year, by animal passions of hatred and selfish greed.

“To what final aim and end”, the supposed progress and advance has allowed these wars? Future post-war programmes promise to end all wars with the aid of modern material civilisation which seems an ambiguous hope *because man will always retain his pugnacious habit and, if he is not spiritually harnessed as of old, he will fight again and again for base material ends only.*

With this depressingly chaotic picture, we can only hope to pin our faith in the thought that

man is supposed to be an intelligent creature and that one day, soon after unbearable sufferings through multiplying privations, he will wake up to realities and question himself in utter desperation, if the modern mad progress is to continue at all. If so, to what final aims and ends? And whether that most sensitive and powerful live-machine, the producer of miracles, the human brain and its efforts are not wasted under the present ideals?

At the dawn of that hour, consciousness will awake and man will realise that he is truly not a part of the lifeless machine but a legitimate offspring of the Almighty Creator from whom much is expected and so little is done by him today for his real Self, the sacred Spirit. In that awakened intellect, his heart and brain will revolt at the very idea of being subjugated and enslaved by the present ogre of base lifeless machine age. The ever present though latent, today, divine spark in the Soul will refuse to be buried under the lifeless modern civilisation. Man will no

longer be prepared to hear with rapt attention the wily voice of the insincere politicians or the dogged arguments of the modern laws. The hum and buzz of the machine will no longer frighten him or coax him to forget the high human duties imposed on him by the Creator and he will, then, doubtless re-establish his human identity to bring back to mankind an era of mental peace and plenty with honesty and theism to guide him.

But this is only a pious hope and however pious a hope may be, if it remains inactive, it will never help mankind. It will remain latent for active use as a printed ideal on paper and the present hollow speeches will be continued in an unbending pride, personified by the modern politicians, and the world will continue to endure the trying tortures of the uncertainty of tomorrows. In that case, the Soul of man will have to be delivered over to the enemy of humanity—the lifeless and mechanical materialism which is bound to further pull down mankind to unknown depths of disgrace.

Such is the awesome picture of this vast and complicated important problem which requires real courage to face and an active opposition to defeat the so-called progressive programmes of today. Many, today, honestly believe that there is only one antidote to counteract this fatal modern disease and that is the active regeneration of Spirituality in a clean and practical form actively brought into man's life.

By the word 'Spirituality', I do not even remotely refer to the modern Conan Doyle seances, planchettes etc., but to the active use of real Spiritual Treasures from our undying Religions, those Spiritual Truths, in fact, which have given *mankind* all laws of morality for every walk of life with their locus in the undivided faith in the all-pervading Spirit of the Almighty Father, as explained logically in our undying Religion, expounded by those superhuman beings, the great Maharshis, who, after unbelievable labours, were blessed with divine visions of truths that were finally codified in our sacred Scriptures.

Remember, it is these very treasures which modernity threatens to put in deadly danger today. If *Sanātan* India allows them with their precious religious cultures to be swept away and eventually drowned in this gigantic tidal wave of modernity, they will have to record a sad and a shameful chapter of the death of a great people which has traced its proud beginning by the captivating and mystic name of *Sanātan Hinduism* and these very facts create feelings of proud joy which is difficult of appreciation by all outsiders.

This precious proud title of 'Sanātan' has outlived recorded history and has, therefore, lived longest in the life-story of man. The fact of longevity alone gives it an unquestioned privilege of being the most truthful and, therefore, invaluable.

I cannot be optimistically presumptuous in the happy conclusions of this world muddle and, therefore, as a humble contribution, in the hope to fulfil my happy dream, I shall attempt a very

brief pen-picture of the everlasting Sanātan beliefs which will touch the outline and fringe of the boundaries of this vast Religion, in which we can all truly find an inexhaustible spiritual reservoir, which will actively aid the huge Sanātan populations in this beloved country of ours and, who knows, the entire mankind, as a concrete help, in guiding the evolution on healthier lines of high ideals of real progress and advance of the human species.

As I write, I am fully conscious that the present world bristles with difficulties but my attempt to contribute these few pages is with a hope of helping to readjust and reform the modern thought and programme. If unfortunately, we, all well-wishers of our species, fail to sensibly recondition our future, man may or may not have descended from the ape but he will certainly become one and thus Darwin's theories will have to be reversed.

Hope sustains mankind and, on it we are all justified to pin our faith.

The Hindus, from the first dawn of human consciousness, believed and worked for the spiritual development of the Soul. All other aspects of this multiple evolution occupy the secondary place in his mind and activities because he came to a definite conclusion, after greatest researches, that behind all the beautiful multipatterned material screen of this vast Universe, the live locus is the immortal Spirit and that alone is the final truth, the driving force, in fact, the beginning and the end of the whole Creation.

This world-consciousness of the Hindu is the foundation of a great and an ancient civilisation which has baffled time, direct impact of other peoples and cultures up to this present day and, I believe, it will remain so for ever, armed and shielded by the many worthy sons of the country, permanently fortified in the impregnable fortress of logical truths. It is no myth to say that it is everlasting and all-convincing because unbiassed logic has been its greatest friend and ally and so

long as any belief or problem is logically correct, it must live for ever. Hence the name of 'Sanātan Dharma' (the Eternal Religion). The very term of "Dharma" denotes an all-prevading just law in the created world. True Dharma is one which justly defines all relations of each unit and individual with the rest, supported all along with unerring logic, to the greatest good and happiness of Creation. The wise words of limitless age are as true today as they were when consciousness first dawned—"YATO DHARMASTATO JAYAH" (whoever is rightly counselled and obeys the commands of Dharma will win over all failures and problems in the life-struggle of Creation).

CHAPTER III

SACHCHIDĀNAND

ARGUMENTATIVE logic is unvarying and no deduction, arrived at by this sure method, can have two different meanings. It brings home the truths, so correctly argued, that other suppositions or doubts have no place in it.

One of the fondest names, given to the Almighty by the Hindu, will explain his logical and understandable conception of His all-pervading, ever-sustaining Spirit in His Creation, manifestly outborn in action.

The first practical and logical conception, the Hindu applies to the manifested creation, is that '*nothing can come from without and, therefore, everything must come from within*'; hence, he argues that all Creation is pervaded with His Spirit and His own Self, the conception of the Great 'Virāta', the entire Universe as manifested

in Creation with Skies, the Stars, the Planets and the World; the manifest Creation, therefore, primarily emerges from Him and, into Him it must end at the conclusion of the final evolutionary cycle, the 'Pralaya' (the great Wave). The Universe, as it is, is thus read by the Hindu but he has to further satisfy himself on the practical side as experienced by the senses.

He says and believes that the triple qualified name practically prevails throughout the Universe, the name being 'Sachchidānand' or, in other words, the Sat, Chit and Ānand of the Great Father and this name and the manifest qualities in action answer all questions that are likely to arise. He is everlasting, He is all-knowing and He is eternal bliss.

It is by active presence of these qualities that the Universe subsists by and goes on evolving from times immemorial in accordance with His laws and His wishes. The first quality of 'Sat' is the all-pervading quality of cohesion or 'the

will to live and maintain for ever' without a change by disintegration.

To all life, men, animals, birds, etc., it is no secret from intelligent man, how dear life is to the being. In fact, no material price or considerations can be weighed to balance with it. Another inborn habit is the recurring wish to know and to know more. This inborn urge is inherently present universally without tuition from without, not only in human children but in all life the inquisitive wish to learn and to know more pervades. And, at whatever period and stage, these two qualities bloom into perfection, the natural contented happiness dawns into eternal bliss.

Since Creation is designed by Him on a transitory evolutionary process, His universal Spirit also assumes the nature of reflection in the changing creations. Therefore, His triple permanent qualities are not exhibited in an unchangeable form in an ever-changing Creation and yet they are apparent throughout the

Universe, like the image of the Sun reflected correctly in all outline and colour in millions of water-vessels.

Is the Sun, reflected on the innumerable water-surfaces of these vessels, the real Sun or not? The answer is 'Yes' and 'No' at the same time because the Sun is only one in the heavens and the image, in the water, is not the Sun and yet the image, you perceive, is the Sun and no other; so also the Spirit, which sustains and drives the Universe on and on, is the all-pervading, everlasting, imperishable Spirit of the Universe, but only in a reflected sense in the transitory changing Creation.

It is, thus, the all-pervading Soul which manifests itself everywhere and at all times in the reflection sense; since the time-bound Creation has to habitually change shapes according to His laws of Nature, His unchangeable Self has to modify itself in a reflection sense in all physical side of the Creation.

To create, sustain, and perpetuate this en-

chanting evolution for all times, the everlasting Spirit must remain the basic foundation, the locus, which all Creation inhales its life-breath from. This universe-wide quality of 'Sat' is all-pervading. The power of cohesion, the will to sustain and perpetuate existence, 'Sat', manifests even in the accepted lifeless objects, like a piece of stone which will refuse to disintegrate by even rough handling and even in a drop of water on your finger-tip which tries not to disengage itself from your finger-tip and fall to the earth, the difference between the two being that one has more 'Sat' than the other and the same quality of 'Sat' pervades through the living, mentally and physically.

The greater the truth in all theories, arguments and objects, the longer they will last in an unaltered state as compared to lesser truths. Real truths are only those that retain unalterability in the three phases of time, the past, the present and the future. Therefore, real 'Sat' or truth is beyond time and space. Since the transitory world is bound by time and space, real 'Sat'

is modified accordingly in the transitory Creation.

The second quality, 'Chit', the inborn urge to enquire and know, is manifest in all life in the Creation in varying degrees according to the intellectual distribution by the Great Father.

The last-named, 'Ānand', happiness or bliss, is again sought with a tenacious longing in the domain of the living. All life is in a tireless search of this great prize in this varied Creation. The choice and conception of 'Ānand' is distinctively degreed. This must necessarily be so according to the intellectual and temperamental inheritance of the 'Jiva' or the Soul. Since man is the most developed intellectually, his search after this has been the greatest and, therefore, his achievement has been the finest in the various Samādhies, unions of heart, mind and body which alone give real comforting peace to the Soul of man and Mokshas. All short-lived aimed happinesses are generally guided by passions and longer ones by Religious Spiritualities.

Thus the Universe has been, is today and shall in future be propelled and guided in its endless evolutionary process by the reflection of the great Sachchidānand.

This great World-Spirit consciousness of the Sanātan faith is the very foundation of the imperishable mental achievement which will permanently decorate and preserve the spiritual temple of an everlasting Religion known as Sanātan Dharma.

With complete faith in this ideal, the belief is that the whole Creation has been sprung by the all-pervading Spirit into unity amidst diversity. It will continue to be unified with these justly proportioned qualities and diversified in physical shape and varied intellectual achievements according to His dictates and wishes, He bestowing each unit of being all that it can justly claim in accordance with the diary of past Karma, actions performed in past lives.

This greatly attractive ideal of World-Spirit, worked out with such practical reasoning by the

Mahātmās, gave them only a temporary satisfaction. They could not bear to sit still and ignore the practical difficulties as experienced by senses in the evolution, where such varied temperaments are daily exhibited along with such complicated contrast, physically and mentally. They felt it their duty to find satisfactory answer to all practical side of life on a just and understandable basis. They argued that since the Creator is the one universal Father, why should the Creation present such abysmal contrast in men, animals, birds etc. Unless, of course, they argued, the great and just Father is otherwise, this distribution of intellect and physical construction should not be so glaringly distinct. They saw, felt and realised the dazzling partiality in the created World and they could not help feeling that it is definitely unbecoming and unjust handiwork by so perfect a Being. They were hard put to satisfactorily explain this great flaw manifested in Creation, put into action under daily observation by such perfect hands.

Man, the most intellectual creature, highly sensitive, felt it most deeply. After sustained and painful enquiries and by ceaseless inquests deep into the mysteries of Creation through many perfect unions with the Eternal Spirit by Samādhis, the highest saintly trances, this puzzling mystery was solved by the Mahātmās in their divine visions sent to them as a just divine message of great human satisfaction of the Transmigration truth of the imperishable Soul. The Hindus, then and today, are completely satisfied by this comforting and wholly logical answer to that seemingly unjust and irritating question of inequality, of partial distributions of all kinds, in the created World as daily seen by mankind, and by this most satisfactory and logical answer of the Transmigration the great Father's throne is maintained in all its just glory and purity in the subtle Hindu mind.

The Eternal Supreme Being creates, sustains and perpetuates this engrossing Creation from times immemorial and will continue it so long as

He is interested in His creative 'Lilā', His own pastime of Evolution, where it amuses Him to see and experience Himself in so many aspects, continued to the day of 'Pralaya' (the great Wave of drowning), lively propelled by the triple pervading qualities of Sat, Chit and Ānand of the Great Father 'Sachchidānand'.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSMIGRATION: *Karma and Samskāra*

THIS delicate subject deals with a most tender spot in man's life of physical deaths of living units. Death has always been most arbitrary and no respecter of wealth, power or position. It carries on its murderous destruction perpetually and uninterruptedly but the process of Transmigration (*punarjanma* or *awāgaman*) optimistically suggests definite aids to life through each span of it. But truly speaking, even in this irreligious and unspiritual age, death remains the most awesome mystery, because even the most intimately loved ones mysteriously slip beyond all possibility of sight and vivid knowledge. And yet, the permanent unalterable fact ceaselessly functions in the life of Creation and will continue to the end of Creation that one who is born must, one day, die. Death is as wide-spread a

knowledge as birth and life, since it terminates sweet intimacy of the Soul with the physical body it assumes, the painfully awesome picture in Creation. Faith in Him alone will modify the sorrowful wrench from the physical body and bring the much needed solace to the Soul of man, when the inevitable end of each life-span is reached. It must never be forgotten that He is the giver of all. He gives you all that you or your undying Soul has worked for in the tantalising mysterious past.

The unerasable influences of those past practices of the Karma, actions, of the Soul must invariably and logically produce varied temperaments with degrees of intellectual distributions; the geniuses and the fools are the daily examples in God's Creation.

The transmigration of Soul is a universal Hindu faith and, therefore, it assumes supreme importance; incidentally, all conflicting speculations of controversial type and possible misunderstandings are put to rest, leaving the practical

side of evolution free to develop on healthy theistic foundations for the real good and progress of the human species.

This Hindu faith in transmigration is as old as time and if any better answer to this vexed question of inequality and all unequal distributions could be forthcoming from anywhere, this transmigration belief of the Hindus would have been replaced long before; but unfortunately there is none.

The lovable ideals of mercy and justice of the Supreme Father are continually practised through this because, in the exercise of His clean justice in the conduct of life in Creation, His unchallenged position of the Supreme Judge with equity will never tarnish in the Sanātan mind and it will help mankind always to put confidence in Him and perpetuate living theistic faith in Creation. The theistic faith in Creation will, for always, remain of the greatest value to all life in human society.

This transmigration belief forms the very

foundation of all diversified mysteries in life, justly adjusting phenomenal inequalities with comforting resignation, 'Thy will be done', since man has been and, in future, will be entirely powerless in all spiritual transfers of arrivals and departures in this world of births and deaths because He alone directs it, the Supreme Judge and the unerring accountant of the Soul's endless chain of Karma.

Outside India and the East, this theory would come under the despised head of 'blind fatalism' but it cannot be helped; wordy reasons of 'ifs' and 'buts' do not alter facts, as witnessed from times immemorial. Daily accidents, physical and mental, events that alter the entire destiny of individuals and nations provide no clear clue to the mysteries of Fate. Past Karma of the Soul, the legitimate and real mother of Fate, varies in its actions by a mysterious method. The correct time and intensities cannot always be read by man but it is not possible to escape the consequences of actions already performed;

the time of reward and reckoning assuredly comes.

When one is confronted with awe-inspiring oscillations of mass movements of peoples, nations and countries in the form of wars, famines, epidemics, earthquakes or, may be, new ideals enunciated by a single individual, which bring about a complete mental revolution in mass minds, men are puzzled to solve these mysterious upheavals, material and spiritually mental. Masses and masses of men think and act in one way overnight, set programmes of yesterday are upset, new aims are born and pursued; it is only then that men cry out the words "Man proposes and God disposes". What else is the Eastern faith? It is the same as those words and they merely title it with the name of 'Fate' or 'Destiny' over which man has no control or say in. All most unexpected circumstances appear to fulfil His great design in the pattern of Destiny and we, men, are but pawns on the elaborate chess-board of His designed schemes, manipulated through

Fate. The hand of Fate is as effective on the individual as it is on peoples.

But the Eastern people understand and fully appreciate the potency of Samskāra or Fate through the logical captivating faith in transmigration; all the awe-inspiring churning of life on Earth has always been most arbitrary and the East is not prepared, with its theistic background and logical apparent results, to accept the work of the stern hand of Destiny as mere illusions or superstitions; he believes there is the Supreme Being, Who is directing all destinies in His Creation with a just hand, tempered with the fatherly concern and solicitude for the created.

Unexpected direction of sanctioned Destiny or Fate makes individuals and peoples carry out Her dictates like a horse running down hill, harnessed to a heavy cart; whether he was pulling it or was being pushed by it he did not know, but all the same rushed along at headlong speed with no time to consider what this movement

might lead to. Such is the potency of His sanctioned Fate, the result of the powerful Sanchita Karma, accumulated consequential results of powerful actions of the past.

But Fate or Destiny, where does it come out of and how does it effect and function in life, is always puzzling to many because the design of Creation is such that the correct and easy reading of it, like we do in the volumes of "Who is Who", is not available for ready reference. We are not in a position to know the sum total of individual Soul's Karmas (actions) through countless past lives and, therefore, we cannot know the Samskāras (the resultant effects of actions of the Soul). We can only bow to the dictates of His design and get the most practical, just and logical answer in the process of evolution.

So many commonplace inequalities, daily witnessed, have no satisfying answer anywhere except in the transmigration which incidentally strengthens faith in Him.

A man lives up to a ripe age of hundred years

and an innocent child is still-born; a child is born in a rich man's house and there is nothing he wishes to possess and money can buy, which is denied to him in his span of life. Another child, in comparison, is born at the same time in a beggar's house and, throughout his life, he has never known what a full stomach feels like and the true value of the essentials to life. One child, apparently clean and innocent, is born blind and ninety-nine others, at the same time, are not denied this greatest gift to life and have the priceless eye-sight in both eyes. Two brothers of the same parents are born, one is robust and healthy all his life and does not know any medical people as friends or even as acquaintances and the other brother has few, if any, as friends except doctors and medical men, sickly throughout his span of life. Another pair of brothers is yet another example where one is highly intellectual and the other utterly foolish. These examples can be endlessly multiplied. One can only deduct a glaring fact from these that all spiritual, "mental,

material, physical unequal distributions could never be justified, if the supreme just Ruler of all life was to ordain that life on earth shall be lived once only.

There is yet another factor in the life of man which finds no satisfying answer anywhere else except in the logical faith of the transmigrations. All life on Earth instinctively carries with it the pervading divine writ of attachments, *inter se*, in families, friends etc. Even in the animal and other life, it is strikingly powerful.

Man, the most intellectual, develops it above the animal instincts into soft and delicate regions of emotional sentimental spheres, right into the realms of spiritualities of the greatest attractions. Whenever this habitual faculty reaches its peak point, they truthfully and meaningly utter such affectionate promises as 'our Soul shall never part again, our love is so staunch and true that nothing can separate us, I may ignore and forget all else but never you, my loved one, let all the forces do their worst, the true and lasting affectionate

attachment I have for you will never fade or disappear', and so on.

All the above-mentioned remarks, from the deepest part of the Soul, have a very strong and live meaning with faith in the believers of transmigration. They know by conviction that all true attachments of the undying Soul are permanent ties and consequently a fascinating sincere resolve is born with faith and practised in life-spans, as they are convinced that physical death of the body is merely like putting on a new suit of clothes and that the undying Soul will never lose touch with their loved ones.

Physical environments, soils of different lands, may be altered but the imperishable Souls' ties with their Sanchita Karmas (accumulated bondage of past associations and actions) will doggedly adhere with all rebirths to receive or pay back the debts of the Souls, *inter se*. These imperishable debts of the Soul are the greatest debts of honour which even the clever modern lawyer will not help you to forget and disown.

Fate or Destiny will see the satisfaction of all such debts according to the attractively fascinating theory of the transmigration in this ceaseless evolutionary process.

Peoples may be born thousands of miles away from one another, separated by oceanic expanses of water or separated by impassable ranges of mountain chains, but Fate, with its inexhaustible resources and subtle methods, will invariably bring allied Souls together on one pretence or another, and when such Souls meet one another as complete strangers for the first time, they realise closest affinity or, may be, repulsion for no earthly reasons. At times, in fact, they are so strange that the otherwise strangers usurp the place of devoted love over all family relations even and enmities greater than all known enemies. Such phenomenal facts in life present no logical satisfying answer anywhere except in transmigrations, and yet the fact remains that those that believe in this and the others who do not are equally affected.

So instead, if this justly fair, magnetically attractive and optimistic faith in the unbroken relations of men was to be replaced by the pessimistic belief that life shall be lived once only on Earth and all the most deeply and sincerely loved ones would be permanently cut adrift for ever at the end of a span and the undying Soul would, then, live permanently afflicted with the painful yearning, pining all moments in a cruel wrenched separation from the most devoted ones, I for one would never attempt to make any more new acquaintances or friends in this span of life and would try and pay back all kindnesses, attachments and affections as quickly as I can and then shut the door of meeting anyone in an attempt to unload and pay back as quickly as possible, before the end of life-span, the most precious possessions of the Soul and Spirit of man of all loves in life and ease the Soul, and then prepare for the future lonely existence. A man's convictions are not those that he has heard from others but only those that he has wrested from the experiences in

life and, as such, a lesson I have learnt with conviction, is that the pangs of separation from the loved objects are definitely more exacting and painful than a score of other pains, including many physical illnesses.

Man reads the world through his own acquired experiences and, therefore, one may succeed with an honest attempt to pay back debts of loves but there seems to be no remedy to avoid inflicting deep injuries in the hearts of those to whom one has endeared oneself, and this idea alone is enough to send away a truthful Soul with a broken heart, if life is to be lived once only on Earth.

Then a strange apathy towards life would assail me with a shadow in between me and Creation. I would then definitely have a recurring feeling like a person who will be forcibly sent away in the middle of the feast of Creation; the thirst of the eyes for all loved ones and the hunger of the Soul would eternally remain unsatisfied—a truly dreary picture to look at in this life

with a defeated feeble heart to apply in dealings with mankind including really loved ones.

Optimistic transmigration would assure that if any debt of attachment, kindness or even of deep love, that vibrates in the innermost strings of the Soul, remained unpaid, it would be possible to do so in the future rebirths. After all, how brief is the span of human life in contrast to the limitless chain of time!

The Hindus are not only blessed in their complete faith in the transmigration but they have witnessed in the past and are today the witnesses of so many cases of transmigration of Souls with undeniable facts. These proofs, in the past and today, are enough to further cement their faith in this just and practical solution of evolutionary process. With this faith in transmigration, the whole Creation becomes intelligible with a systematic design for a just purpose, instead of a dubious thought of its being a huge accident with no particular aim and pattern aided by understandable reasoned logic and commonsense.

This is accepted as another truth like the Spirit of all-pervading Almighty. Such satisfactory answers to the mysteries of inequality in life on earth create in men a compelling resolve to practise real good in Creation instead of the idea of the supposed other worlds, because suppositions, without living proofs, are always less convincing. The wholly logical and practical side of life, influenced by the Karma and the Samskāra, is born from the transmigration belief and thus brings, within reach of all, all the human laws of Religion, morality and all codes of goodness and honour at the free choice of the individual to work up or down the ladder in the World's ceaseless evolutionary process.

It is strongly contended by many that if Samskāra, Fate or Destiny, call it what you like, is to be the sole arbiter in life's march in Creation, how can a free-will function at all? It is certainly a rationally logical question which seems complicated, when applied to the practical side of life, but, in truth, it is not so, if only Karmas

and Samskāras, actions and their unescapable results, are more intelligently understood.

I will attempt to define, in simplest language and thought, what they mean and how they function.

Karma, in simple language, is an action by a being and action, once performed, is like a gun fired. The bullet escapes the muzzle and must travel in the aimed direction. It is not then possible to try and put the bullet back in its original position of the gun. So also, action, once performed, must give birth to the resultant Samskāras or the natural results of any action titled as Fate or Destiny, where perforce we have to face and endure the consequences. Remember, we are free to act but are bound by consequences of acts, be they good or bad. To further bring this seemingly complicated question within the reach of all, some very commonplace examples are needed. Let us, therefore, say for instance then, that a man picks up a glass of water and drinks it. The action is performed and the

consequences of appeasing the thirst cannot be escaped; or, he eats his food, hunger must be satisfied; or, a man takes a vigorous running exercise, his respiration must get faster and generally he gets a muscular fatigue, and so on. The list of Karmas can be endlessly multiplied, since Karma can be performed physically, mentally and vocally, be it minor or major, the Samskāras would always retaliate in consequence. But who can, if any, have the complete listed account of the string of Karma of life except the Great Father?

Although the entire list of Karmas is safely filed in the record room of the undying Soul, the thick veil of His boundless Māyā (the transitory veil of ever changing highly enchanting mythical scenes in Creation), which He compassionately spreads over Creation, carefully hides it in the sub-conscious minds and only traces are visible in the inborn temperaments of men, as distinctive choices and habits with degreed faculties of intellect. ,

I have described the veil of Māyā as an act of compassion of the Great Father, since we, the most intellectually developed beings, are, all said and done, mere children compared to Him. Even, in that wayward age of childhood, the earthly parents work out the most elaborate and painstaking programmes for children's mental and physical developments with very definite boundaries of sweets and toys etc., and yet they consciously, with deep feelings of human compassion, want to avoid cruelly painful sulking and fretting of the child, when tasty sweets and loved toys are taken away to affectionately guide the physical and mental life of the child for his greater good. In doing so, some of the most intellectual parents use all the ingenuity at their command to compose the irritated little being, if the child happens to be of an intelligent and obstinate nature and, sometimes, even the childish mind takes a long time to quiet down to normal state and refuses any substitutes to the loved objects that have been taken away from him, by the

parents for salient reasons, because he is unable to intelligently appreciate the parents' designs. In the same way, if the compassionate Father did not spread His veil of *Māyā* over the most highly developed memories of the human Souls, memory and intellect, there would be so many men, reborn with strong and deep attachments to beings and places of their past lives, that this span of life, to such people, would be one long dream of misery, a dreadful life of haunted memories, enough to drive highly sensitive Souls to madness. But when earthly father takes so much trouble to make the children forget their childish attachments with more amusing substitutes, the Great Father, likewise, compassionately spreads the veil of His *Māyā* to cover vivid recollections of the past. Exceptions always prove the rule and sometimes Souls do carry precious memories with vivid recollections.

The Hindu, therefore, believes firmly that the Soul of man has not suddenly appeared on Earth from nowhere, unrelated to the Creation

in its past existences but, on the contrary, long time has elapsed in its travels by transmigrations, accumulating experiences through its constant touch with the Creation and has been ceaselessly performing its Karmas, the list of which is in the sub-conscious Self only, hidden from the conscious Self and the physical eye. "

All fond relations in Creation have that aforesaid background, where deeply loved blood relations and friends and despised and hated enemies for good reasons and, sometimes, with feeble ones, understandably justify the continued linked chain of the undying Soul with the Creation. If it was not so, how could the puzzling loves of attractive fascinations at the first sight be explained away or, the reverse of it, detesting revulsions with the first meeting etc.

The full Diary, in the sub-conscious, can only be read occasionally by great Mahātmās or told by the age-long astrological system in India, if the astrologer is a good worker. I would like to add a few words about Astrology, a delicate

and fascinating science of great ages. It has served to illumine and help men to profitably forecast events in individual lives codified into horoscopes.

India and the East have consistently taken the aid of this great science from vast ages and if the mathematical deductions are carefully and correctly worked out, the reading of coming events is seldom wrong. I know there is a very widespread belief within and without India that Astrology is a mysterious subject closely allied to black magic etc., unmethodic and un-understandable by the layman and his rational grasp.

Forecasts by astrologers are looked upon by so many to some mysterious occult faculty, miracles or good guess work etc. Whenever such foretelling comes out true, it is attributed to a fluke, a lucky shot in the dark that gets to the target somehow, a huge gamble where there is little to lose and much to gain and so on. But, in truth, it is not so. The effect of

the powerful planetary system continually influences the whole Creation. Each being of a unit, its activities, gains and losses in worldly possessions and healths are consistently guided by the planetary stars. Why the planetary stars so influence life is not known to man, but that they do influence is true. The Great Teachers discovered this uncanny truth and, then, reduced all their reading into a mathematical process of great accuracy. After this great discovery, they emphasized their process of reading into a logical scheme into mathematical figures, such as two and two will always add into four and never three or five, and so on.

According to Sanātan beliefs and reading, there are altogether fourteen planets in our system, the Sun being the ruler. Nine out of these are easily accessible to the senses of physical eye, two are subtle and three invisible which are not seen and accepted yet by modern telescopic discoverers. Clever astrologers take full account of all the fourteen and if they can correctly count all

the influences in the birth-time horoscope the results of their prophecy are correct.

Personally I have not studied this great science but my reading of it all is like this. The whole planetary system is in continual motion and, therefore, the subtle action of the planets at different degrees and angles differs in the influences on all earthly creations including Mother Earth herself. Weathers, rains, storms and wars and diseases are forecast, fluctuations in food grains and precious stone and metal markets are foretold. The influence of the planets creates circumstances that compel mankind to spontaneously desire to own or get rid of these commodities which naturally must fluctuate the markets of the world and so on.

The individual, as I have said above, does not appear on Earth for each life-span as a complete stranger. On the contrary, he or she has to respect all transactions of give and take in accordance with the list of Karmas (actions) of the Soul's ceaseless travels in the past lives.

Thus, when the Soul reappears each time with a new birth and body, the exact time chosen by Destiny is so carefully worked out that the pattern of planets in their ever changing positions must make them cast their varied influential rays and, then, the astrologer works out his mathematical problem, guided by the marvellous code of astrological science into a horoscope. So, in simple words, the forecast of a horoscope is no mystery but simply a detailed photograph of the Soul's Karmas and inevitable Samskār (action and the unescapable results, or in a simpler language the cause and effect of each Soul according to the Karmas performed by it). One rational example will further clear the reader's mind and, therefore, I will say that a man exposes himself for some hours under the bright tropical rays of the sun. The result or Samskār of such an action would be a sun-burnt skin. If, then, the being wishes to modify the photograph of his action of sun-burn, he will have to perform more Karmas, such as keeping in shade and even

resorting to the use of various preparations to restore the original normal skin-hue by the use of the famous Elizabeth Arden's preparations etc. In short, **Karmas** and **Samskār** must travel together in the life of each unit of a being and astrological photograph is the horoscope. Modern Astronomy and science is slowly but surely travelling in the same direction in which the great **Maharshis** developed the great science of the planetary system. The cosmic and violet rays from the Sun play phenomenal part in the life-story of Creation. Another member of the planetary system, the Moon, like-wise conspicuously influences all Creation. For instance, the plant-life researches by the ancient researchers codified their master discoveries in the fascinating **Āyurveda** system of medicines. Their claim with convincing proof is that all herbal medicines will differ in their potency of cures and effects by the 'Tithi' (the position of the moon during her fortnightly travel, each month). They say that different herbs should be taken out of the ground

on the correct 'Tithis', so that full potency of effective cures may be guaranteed and if this calendar-wise advice is not listened to, they will be of little or doubtful use as medicines.

This ambiguous statement by Āyurveda can always be tested by any one to convince the truthfulness of those great people. Similarly, all planets are continually discharging their subtle influencing rays on all Creation for or against the being according to their relative angle which is read and understood through Astrology in the horoscopes that are cast by astrologers. Since it is a mathematical science, good astrologers' works are far more satisfying and correct as compared to their less fortunate brothers in this great profession. It is only natural that it should be so, because we daily witness in all the educational institutions that every class presents students of mixed variety, good and bad mathematicians are daily seen. I, for instance, am bad at sums and figures in comparison to many of my friends and class fellows.

In the ceaseless journey of the Soul through transmigrations, all the variations in individuals of temperaments and the distribution and the sharing of good and bad fortunes, due to the cause and effect of Karmas, is then administered by the planets, and horoscopes are the photographs of fated lives.

Since Karma is the mother of Fate or Samskār, logically further Karmas can alter and modify the retaliatory effects in the life-span by performing reverse Karmas as antidotes for or against the Soul.

Therefore, Astrology has many suggestions to offer to mankind to help him through religious practices, charities of various types and other methods such as use of metals, herbal medicines and the nine planetary gems.

Large number of people in India and the East believe in the active potency of planetary influences and there are so many more men who do not, but planets do affect all in the same way.

All said and done, however, the vivid picture

of the Soul's entire long list of Karmas and Samskāras is only known to Him, Who chalks out Destinies or Fates.

For the faultless human progress, man's physical actions, his tongue and the purity of intellect should all contribute to his real uplift in life but in this world of ups and downs and the present atmosphere, faultless Karma, for Karma's sake, is well-nigh impossible and, therefore, only an honest attempt can help all to elevate the Soul for its betterment and real progress in the cycles of births and deaths.

Notions that all good can accrue into man for materially effecting a complete change in the Karmas and Samskāras by the accumulation of book-knowledge alone are false. No amount of unassimilated pure book-knowledge can help anyone in his true elevation. The highest amount of accumulated goodness and purity, ever to be found in the embodiment of a single being, is only in real Sādhus and Mahātmās who have bodily assimilated all purity in their mental bodies of

the Spirit. Hence the universal Eastern homage to the saffron uniform.

I will not attempt to discuss this fascinating and alluring subject of Sādhus here in these pages, as, I feel, this is a special subject which can only be of interest to those who have already reached a certain special stage, bitten by attractive mysticism of an elevated Soul and I have, therefore, merely mentioned them as an illustration to facilitate the understanding of the great doctrine of Karma and Samskāra.

Karma is ceaselessly recurring in a non-stop-motion. After one action, another follows to enhance or modify the consequent effects of the preceding Karma, such as, after too heavy a meal, correctly proportioned rest and exercise and even medicines can be resorted to, to alleviate the dangers of obesity or after very heavy exercises, rest and massage and even stimulants can minimise the tiring effects and so on.

So the belief, that if Fate influences the future of individuals and peoples, the will to act

disappears or is rendered powerless, is not correct; on the contrary, continual Karma (action) can deeply influence the effects of Fate. As an example, a man carelessly, without the aid of good counsel of a developed conscience, walks in a thorny jungle without putting on his shoes. As would be natural, a thorn embeds itself in the fleshy tender part of his foot with painful results and breaks off leaving a portion of it in the foot. It would be senselessly futile to, then, feel suddenly wise and kindly and wish for the thorn to come out by the mere wisdom of experience or by kindly stroking the thorned part. Such wishfully wise thinking would be of no value and what would help you would be to get another thorn to needle out the broken bit out of the foot and get relieved. If the thorn proves to be a very painful affair, he will not indulge in unconsidered programmes in future and will consult his wisely tutored conscience.

In short, careless Karma (action) by an untutored unintelligent conscience was responsible

for the fate of the painful thorn in your foot and by wisdom and good counselled conscience, another Karma of needling it out is performed to minimise more trouble and suffering. So also, Fate or effects of past actions would always affect lives but further free-willed action is always open to you to perform. The results will depend on wise Karmas. The wisdom of Karmas depends on experience, knowledge and practice of Soul's mental faculties, harnessed and gathered by association and constant company of Elevated Souls or by following their advice, codified in the undying truths of Scriptures and Religions.

But if more ambitious attempts are to be made to minimise or right the major wrongs committed in the past, wrongs that might involve the greatest sufferings, full aid of pure mental energy, harnessed and properly directed into action, cannot be dispensed with and *vice versa*. So now we come to a most crucial problem of how to accumulate this valuable mental energy of wisdom, and goodness.

CHAPTER V

SATSANG

It is, indeed, a treasure of the greatest value but is one where money in the market will not help you to buy or collect. It can only be accumulated through incessant impacts, associations and general surroundings and company, physical up to a point and much more mental; in short, it is a systematic tuition of unsullied intellect assimilated into the Self to be able to perform right Karma (actions of goodness), energetically to modify and wash off the damaging effects of adverse *sanchita Samskāras* (the effects of accumulated actions of the past). If past good actions have already given Souls happy fated lives, Satsang will further help to make the already good lives better. As an instance, men inherit great positions, properties and wealth etc., but by wrong associations and company so many

of them virtually ruin all, while Satsang would guard against such catastrophies.

Therefore, throughout the vast field of Religion, no greater emphasis has been laid on any other subject compared to Satsang or 'pure elevating company'.

• The only other mention of hope in this imperfect world, compared to this to help humanity, is said to be the Satguru or the pure Spiritual Teacher, the one who dispels mental darkness and, with it, all ills in existence and helps you on the correct road of progress and elevation for here and hereafter; but Satsang, in a wider sense, covers also the association of the Satguru.

What, then, does this enigmatic word 'Satsang' really denote? Can we procure it? If so, how?

'Satsang' primarily means close and intimate association, physical up to a point but much more mental, continually of truthful goodness. Man has two kinds of company distinctly, the physical and the mental. The outer, physical, is

comparatively superfluous compared to the inner important, mental. For instance, so many people have to attend garden parties. Having once reached there, they aimlessly roam about, bored stiff in a brown study, uninterested in the crowd around them and thinking of other things which are of interest to them and, therefore, physically in one company and mentally in another.

Like the entire Hindu thought, material physical decidedly takes a second place to the mental spiritual and it is, therefore, the mental company which is the important one. Here again, the Hindu thought goes to the root of real existence and makes no attempt to waste valuable moments to probe the outward material crust, however polished and glittering it might be to look at, which the modern life is trying to push to the forefront.

The mental eye takes precedence over the physical, at all times. In fact, it is the preliminary inspirer of all actions and vibrations in the physical world. According to the Eastern spiri-

tual belief, the mental chamber is definitely divided into two compartments of heart and brain, or in other words, the suggestive centres of the emotional untiring 'Mana' (or heart) and the final decisive chamber of 'Buddhi' (or the reasoned intellect), where all preconceived biassed bigotries or immature or impulsive resolves and partially understood or blurred reading of so many things and theories are properly filtered and wise decisions are taken to avoid unjust and painful mistakes.

We, therefore, boil down the argument to the two most potent faculty centres of the Soul and are at pains to find out and devise means and ways to correctly control and direct this boundless energy of man for good or bad.

Evolutionary process is destined to continue uninterruptedly and, with it, the transmigration goes on. The Soul, in the cycles of births and deaths, is wholly unaffected, retaining its feature of indestructibility, since it is a spark, part and parcel of the imperishable One. All through its

journeys through repeated lives, it carries its mental faculty as its constant companion and, therefore, the advice of such an inseparable comrade is supremely important for the Soul's benefit.

During the span of each life in this tantalising world, known as 'Jagrat', or the awakened world, which is also in continual motion, varied pictures are presented to the Soul in this endless world panorama, where good, bad and indifferent, all must exist side by side, as a matter of course, to emphasize contrast and form the whole, driven on by Him in limitless variety of His powerful Māyā.

The sacred spark of the Soul, although pure from its ancestry and compassionately endowed with the great faculties of intellect, is bewildered and confused by the glare of His all-powerful Māyā, unless he can find, in his lonely travel, good and friendly company and experienced guides to warn him of the many pitfalls during each journey of life. The quest after and the

eventual finding of such friends and associations for the true uplift of real progress, shielded from dangers and protected by constant mental surroundings is then the definition of Satsang.

Physical associations definitely have a deep influence on man but not nearly so powerful as the mental spiritual; for instance, a man, constantly living in a temple with a shaven crown and painted forehead and continually committing crimes, will never make a good company, and the precincts of the holy temple do not help to make him pure because he is physically in the temple but mentally in a house of crimes.

Similarly, highly lettered scholars and profusely talkative on the subject of paper and ink only, where words of wisdom and righteousness are for lip-service and have not been assimilated into the Soul's body for active use, cannot be accepted as 'Satsangis' (or elevated company). On the contrary, such associations often confuse

one in the correct understandings of precious religious beliefs and, therefore, only those men alone, who have truly assimilated the pure Religious truths into the body of their Soul and cannot help but practising them in their day to day dealings and Karmas, are to be chosen for Sat-sang company.

'Example is better than precept' is, constantly and naturally, performed by such Souls in their hourly activities of thoughts, words and actions.

The Satguru (the most respected pure and elevated spiritual teacher) and his constant company and all other allied Souls of purity, wisdom and goodness, are the priceless teacher companions in life's school of learning and, only in such company, the potent human energy, its intellectual purity and grandeur, are released and displayed into action.

If, by honest laborious search, the above-mentioned company is collected for real mental purity, it always proves to be the greatest friend

of the Soul as a permanent companion which can continually advise soundly and guide him on right paths in life. Man can, then, with confidence achieve the highest aims of real Religious humanity, the Soul's final aims.

Satguru's constant company and aid makes real progress of the Soul easier for ninety-nine per cent of the people in the grim crusade of life. In the end, one can sum up this important argument by saying that all occasions, mentioned above, and all developed Souls which can help you to progress towards your chosen ideals of the highest goal, are Satsangis and every moment, spent amid such surroundings, is accepted as the Satsang period, a period which is purest and best in life.

Satsang, therefore, is indispensable. It is of the highest importance to man to fulfil the final aspirations of the Soul. It is gained by constant physical and mental company, raising the Soul to those giddy heights that have astounded mankind for ages. Once you become a Satsangi,

you are no longer alone and friendless and, then, even the Great Father, whose chief merit is Sat, is always close to you to guide you and help you through all bunkers of life.

In day to day practical existence of man, Satsang is invaluable and, like the transmigration, it forms one of those important pillars on which the Sanātan culture finds its eternal support. Satsang is, again, another aid to further satisfy the spiritual urge of the Soul and, because it is for the Soul alone, it falls in line with the recurring Hindu mentality where Spirit takes precedence over matter. This elevating company and association gives birth to 'Nirmal Buddhi' (highly developed and pure intellect or a faultless and sacred human conscience). Today, this sacred term of clean Human conscience is prostituted in full use by so many undeveloped material beings. Conscience unquestionably is the monarch of man's intellect but the first question that crops up is, where was it born, who were its parents and teachers? Every debauched

material intellect, every criminal, can and does make use of this sacred term freely today and the saddest part is that, without a trace of experience of the pure conscience, by merely repeating the words, they all firmly believe that all their actions and thinking must be correct and elevating because they could utter the words.

As human beings, all have a right to use this sacred term of human conscience but not many do it rightly, because, in this material age, high spiritual company is absent and, in the absence of such company (Satsang), the sacred word of human conscience truly becomes a mock word. Satsang is a rare commodity in this age and whenever and wherever it can be found, do not lose sight of it, and attach yourself to the person unconditionally if you love your Soul more than the callous material life of today. Do not confuse elevated human conscience with the mere meaningless words uttered by so many materially-minded beings in this age, where Spirituality is more or less absent.

Man is Spirit first, combined with matter of flesh and blood which forms the whole. Man, as he appears in flesh and blood, is a combination of Spirit and Matter; in existence, they are inter-dependent on each other so long as man thrives in Creation. To apply total energy and capacity of man, as he appears, the material and spiritual should both be utilised for the final high aims. Satsang helps both the material and, more so, the spiritual until the time the spiritual side has developed to a very high stage. Man has to contend and get aided by the material side also to help him forward towards his final aim.

CHAPTER VI

IMAGE-WORSHIP: *Dire need of Incarnation*

THE material side has, therefore, been wisely used to the same end, because the material and physical side of man in Creation is important and cannot be ignored altogether. On the contrary, man has some very important and impressionable inlet doors that consistently convey, to the inner Spirit, powerfully influencing transmissions as visualised by the physical senses. Those material physical outlines and other experiences, through senses of the physical body, take shape impressingly in the inner mental eye of conception and thought and finally into the Soul's greatest store-house of memory in the chambers of mind.

The Hindu thought, convinced of the indispensability of the material side in Creation, decided to make full use of physical shapes for

his great ideal of spiritual uplift. He bows to the living fact that material shapes are endowed with unquestionable power to influence the inner Soul through innumerable variety in His vast Creation. He firmly believes that all shapes are designed by Him to deeply influence the mental eye of the Soul and he has, therefore, logically and gratefully accepted the divine gift of the physical eye and shapes to truly help him forward on his missionary journey in the process of transmigrations in life to the ultimate spiritual aims and ideals, which each individual is free to select for himself according to his choice of temperamental inheritance, most suited to the individual being.

Logic would confirm that "a ton of oil will not be held in an ounce bottle". It is also quite true, therefore, that the Hindu worshipper logically chooses to worship and humbly address the chosen aspect of his personal God. In doing so, he intelligently appreciates that the aspect of his individual and personal choice is definitely within

his reach of understanding capacity as a finite and, therefore, he can wholeheartedly focus his entire mental energies on to his chosen favourite ideal, single-mindedly and intelligently, instead of the unintelligible identity of the limitless Infinite Almighty, Omnipotent etc., with only his limited finite capacities of appreciation. While doing so, he does not choose this most practical method because he is even remotely unconscious of the limitless all-pervading aspect of Him but simply because he is intelligently conscious of his own person in a limited capacity.

In all physical side of Creation, we all appreciatively realise that large-sized objects in material shapes must occupy greater areas than the smaller sizes. An elephant will always fail to stand in an area where an ant can stand with ease and, therefore, we intelligently conclude that it is impossible for an elephant to try and compete for space with an ant and *vice versa*. The same analogy can be truthfully applied to mental capacities in God's Creation. Therefore, with

definite boundary limitations of man in mental and physical spheres, he will always be compelled to discover objects and ideas that are within the possibility of his grasp and size. While conscious of his finite boundary lines, man has believed with faith in the voice of logic and Religions, where the Almighty, Omnipotent, has been portrayed in the lines of the Scriptures and, yet, he realises his own definite limitations in everything. For instance, if one wears a pair of smoked glasses, one perforce sees everything smoked and dulled but one undoubtedly remains fully conscious and alive to the fact, all the time, that the world around him is not smoked. If one thinks otherwise, one would, as a rule, be always assailed with deep inner discord and painful confused intelligence and such a thought would always trouble him.

The wide field of human intellect is as vast as it is complicated. The physical eye's transmissions keep on powerfully influencing the Soul continually. Therefore, it is to be admitted that

the physical shapes and their influences are of great value to satisfy the multifarious human imagery to appease the Soul's hungry quest after its chosen aims and ideals. The Hindu has not wasted or lightly treated this potent gift in Creation to mankind and has most usefully and logically used it in the form of image-worship in various ways, since he is convinced with firm and attractive faith that He pervades in the entire Universe and all objects in Creation are part and parcel of His 'Virāta' (entire Universe as manifested in Creation with Skies, the Stars, the Planets and the World). Like we draw miniature pictures of men, animals, landscapes or even much larger objects for our selected choice to appease our senses of vision to satisfy the material eye or extract the essences of perfumes from masses and masses of flowers for the satisfaction of the senses of the nose where individual choices vary, as Rose, Jasmins etc., so also the Hindu is given freedom in the choice of His aspect, most fittingly suited to individual Soul.

Since He pervades everywhere, it is, therefore, ultimately *the attractive faith in the chosen aspect which generates the worship and not the material outlines*. But those outlines do definitely help to focus with success on to the World-Spirit beyond with greater ease and a surer aim than an attempt without such aid, simply because man is shaped himself in Creation and all things he has to deal within the world have also shapes, and shape does and will always remain the most familiar and understood object for mankind with great power to influence.

Even in the modern world, we invent figurative images to appreciate and try to bring the invented expressions within the grasp of all. The mechanical-minded men will understand, if we described the Rolls Royce motor car fitted with a fifty horse power engine and, yet, the one who describes and the other who understands are conscious and convinced that the engine of very fine steel is truly unrelated to the live horse in every way and, yet, the fact remains that if

the horse power description of the systematic power measurement is not used, the potency of the engine will not be described or appreciatively understood quickly and easily. So also, images by the Hindu have played the same important part in helping to convey, to the worshippers, an understandable expression, something within the grasp of the Finite, of the Infinite. Likewise, we describe the Almighty as kind and merciful and, whenever one thinks of kindness, one's thoughts invariably search the list of experiences in life. We have been affectionately kissed, caressed or smacked etc., by parents and elders and we have learnt that all practices as affections between any two entities are possible only through the image of man. Instinctively, we think of the protecting arm of the Almighty Father etc., and, therefore, the outline of an image does help the thought to focus on ideals with success.

The Hindu has constantly and unblushingly taken the aid of the image to focus through to

the Great Spirit beyond and, therefore, he challengingly asks all those who have not logically appreciated this fundamental living truth in Creation and of such importance to man, where the Hindu thought has used it for image-worship, that he is to be informed if a single individual exists in this wide world who can truthfully claim not to be an image-worshipper and will not continue to be so in future.

This senseless and mythical slur on the Hindu practice will always be totally destroyed the moment any one is prepared to throw, on this subtle though commonplace practice of the Hindus, the bright light of unbiassed logical reason as borne out by hard unescapable facts in existence in the world.

Any honest man will be compelled to see eye to eye with the Hindu thought on this much abused, distorted and wholly misunderstood practice, and the Hindu believes, it is designed to live as it has done so far and, in the end, outlive all other doctrines pitted against it, just

because man will remain what he has been and his entire being, composed of Matter and Spirit, will not alter for any imaginary ideals if those are opposed to circumstances and facts in Creation and existence.

Man's composition of Spirit and Matter will continue for ever to be influenced by the composite nature of both, in their respective fields, to help the whole being. In our day to day existence, the World is experienced mentally and also physically through shapes and senses and, during these experiences, what do we see or have seen in the past, what have we heard or read about and what do we daily witness with our eyes, for seeing is believing?

Only one picture pervades through Creation and that is that, in the entire World, every being is really and consistently performing the much despised practice of the Hindus of pure and simple image-worship in every hearth and home and, even, in the jungles and trees, all parts of the Earth and Water.

According to the natural laws of Creation, we, the great human beings, have not appeared in shape and form from thin ether. We have been actually born of parents with shapes. We have to carry with us the natural ties of attachment which we daily and hourly practise on living images to finally reach the Spirit and Soul that occupies the material images. And without the full and practical aid of the material image—the despised practice of the Hindu—we cannot even remotely hope to reach the goal of Spirit and Soul. We have loved or worshipped in varying degrees and have actually practised this image-worship process in various ways to fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, children, friends and, even, animals and birds. The live Soul in all life is essentially spiritual and invisible. It cannot be physically touched and, yet, we love or worship the Soul of the loved ones all our lives, which we do by the worship of the physical image and how do we discharge this unescapable writ of attachment and affection, love or worship,

daily by trying to convey the invisible waves of attachment from one being to another? What does actually happen in this subtle commonplace transaction?

The message of that divine mystery called Love, during its many stages down to passions, travels from one Soul to another and is responded to. In this, the sender and the responder are both material images in action and the message is spiritual. The all-powerful driving force of Love, with its many stages and names and its primary and final abode with the Master of Mysteries, flows into Creation from that inexhaustible reservoir of the Almighty. It is unfathomable and cannot be explained away and is therefore, destined to remain a dominating magical mystery, which all may practise but none may fully understand.

After it has descended from the high pedestal of the Creator into Creation, it continually performs miracles. Something strange happens. The wholly spiritual non-material wave of Love

travels from one being to another and is responded to through an unallied agency of material images. This recurring daily commonplace incident definitely denotes something, something so impressing that we cannot waive it aside for choice. If we apply logical reason, we are compelled to own that this is the only door, provided by Mother Nature or the Almighty, to transmit and get responded to in the daily practice of the dominating inborn faculty of Love. In other words, Creation is utterly helpless to invoke the aid of any other agency for the practice of this all-powerful, all-pervading, divine faculty of truly immeasurable dimensions and potency.

This divine mystery of Love pervades continually all through the Universe and, in the discharge of this naturally imposed duty of attachment, all life enjoys fleeting moments of great joy. In fact, it is the only alive and driving force in Creation. No other way is known in Creation to fulfil the natural urge of attachment

except through the much despised Hindu ideal of image-worship.

While this recurring image-worship goes on uninterrupted, we remain alive and conscious of the fact that it is not the physical body that is the real object of our love or worship but something quite different, the live Spirit inside really, to which the worship is offered and the fact remains that, to approach and worship the sacred spark of life, the Soul and Spirit, it is not possible without the aid of the material image, so designed and willed by Him.

Although the material image rationally has no value, compared to the Spirit and Soul, yet it becomes fully sanctified by the thought of its close association with the Spirit. In the same way, as man after death is no more in the body but the homage to the dead is always a world-wide tribute, consequently images, temples, churches and mosques carry with them the sanctified respect of all God-knowing peoples in the world to the Great Spirit beyond.

To further illustrate, a daily practical incident should be quoted. I will, therefore, attempt to draw a pen-picture of daily occurrences. A devoted father and mother pick up their tiny infant in their arms in fond paternal embrace, uttering the child's pet name of Rāma and intermittently talking to him in that mysterious language of Love where reason and calculated logic are totally absent, trying the whole time with those meaningless utterances and with their entire being to convey to the child the messages of that emotional reservoir called affection or Love.

The World is old but no one has succeeded in deciphering the depth and the mystery of Love and, therefore, man's pen has also failed to do it precisely. To the physical eye, the incident mentioned above is a commonplace one where the child's material body is being fondled within the parents' material arms and, in this natural caress of the child's material body, a miracle happens. The entirely ignorant being, wholly

untutored, totally undeveloped mentally, in a word "innocent", opens his tiny mouth displaying two half-grown white pearl-like specks of his milk-set of teeth and grins with deep joy. What has happened? The Soul and Spirit, which is independent and beyond the material touch and conception, has been touched by the material embrace of the parents and the Spirit of the child has unquestionably responded through his material body. In short, the worship of the material image by the material image has fully succeeded in the transmission of spiritual messages through the agency of material images.

But similar occurrences daily repeat themselves in love of all kinds and stages between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, friends, even animals and birds etc. With considered reasoning on facts, we can wisely conclude that the image, created by the Creator, is the only medium provided by Him for practice, tuition and advance in the transmission of the Soul's deep inborn habit of spiritual message to any

destination within and without the body and also within and without the World.

If we ignore and not make use of this natural gift of image-worship for focussing to convey the Soul's spiritual message to the Spirit beyond, what else can we do? The Almighty will not fit in the boundary lines and limitations of an unquestioned Finite. All pictures, to be appreciatively recognised, must be properly focussed in accordance with the Finite's capacity of the lens of human intellect which has defined boundaries.

The Finite, with definite boundaries, can never take in the boundless Infinite, so logic would confirm. Therefore, the inconceivable terms of the 'Almighty' and 'All-pervading' etc., cannot satisfy the imagination of the Finite because the Finite does not and cannot know the "*All*". The "*All*" is beyond the Finite for always. Even cold reasoning would convince any one that a Finite cannot take in and, therefore, hold the Infinity at any time and, if utter disappoint-

ments of misfits are to be avoided, the Finite will always be compelled to discover something of its own sized understanding to ensure fitting satisfaction of the Soul's endless search of the Creator—the most obscure and hidden Identity—to discover for a live Soul with his physical body. It will only then become possible for the Soul to enjoy and appreciate, to its full capacity, the divine gift of Love to the furthest end of Love Divine.

All those ambiguous expressions of the 'Almighty', 'Omnipotent', 'Omniscient' etc., are only for the being's imagery field of thoughts and vocabulary but cannot, at any time, be conceived, much less understood and least appreciated. They have always been more qualitative rather than practical and since life on Earth has to be lived practically, practical method and theory had to be evolved for the real use and benefit of mankind.

After having pointed out the Finite's limited capacity as compared to the Infinity, I am

constantly reminded of the saddest words ever uttered or written by man, because they ring with the depressing hopeless disappointment. After incomparable mental efforts of human imaginations and thoughts, that most expansive and highly potent human faculty which has seldom accepted defeat, the words are: 'Neti, neti, 'neti', meaning, 'This is not all, this is not all, this is not all,' the fateful concluding words of the fourth Veda, the end of the four volumes, which, after having been compiled so long ago, shine today as incomparable gems in the archives of literature and the biggest treasure of wisdom in man's possession. And what does this fact denote? It simply means that the Infinity has been, is today, and shall in future be beyond the grasp of the Finite. So also, the highest qualitative expressions in practice are inconceivable by the Finite. Therefore, the Almighty, Omnipotent etc., though true, are designed to help and enhance human imaginations only but cannot be conceived and correctly appreciated.

Thus, the search of the limitless Almighty, All-pervading, without comprehensible boundary lines and, therefore, without some practical measurable target, would always remain beyond human faculty. For this salient reason, Hinduism, not satisfied with the inconceivable expressions, became more inquisitive and restless in the eternal search of the Creator.

Finally, with the accepted logical theory of the All-pervading Spirit, he worked on with the object of putting something within reach of the Finite, something which was truthful, logical and practical, within his understanding limit, something in fact that he could focus on to or, as a soldier would say, for use as a foresight on the rifle of intellect to aim at the target of the World-Spirit beyond.

The Soul's habit in the created World is definitely transmigration through the mysterious process of births and deaths, irrevocably designed by Him as a practical, understandable, systematic scheme and, therefore, to finally

complete His master production of this absorbingly interesting planet of ours and the entire intelligent life-scheme of His, He has imposed on Himself the magnetically correct duty, like the transmigrations of human Souls, the oft-repeated Incarnations of Himself owing to His fathomless compassionate fatherly concern for His children on Earth. The compassionate Father helped His children on Earth with His many Incarnations in finite forms to further help and cement their logical faith in the correct reading of the Creation. Faith is that powerful entity which is always capable of astounding mankind with miracles. According to the Hindu belief, all Incarnations are expressions in bone and blood of Him in a finite outline for the benefit or compassionate love for His children on Earth. So also, He, the real and legitimate Father, occasionally appears in flesh and blood, out of compassion for His real children on Earth, provided man can generate in himself the immeasurable potency of yearning faith or He may choose

to tutor His children on Earth, because He knows that He Himself, the Almighty, would otherwise always be beyond them, their reading and reach.

The whole scene enacted by Incarnation is very similar to watch a genius grandfather. After tutoring and lecturing thousands of high intellectuals, the grandfather comes home to play the donkey with his beloved grandchildren. Rational callous material eyes would condemn such senseless petty display by a genius but not human affectionate hearts because they will, in sympathy with the genius, realise that the genius grandfather would have been definitely cruel and ununderstandable to the children if he had chosen to associate with his beloved progeny with the most serious works and words beyond the capacity of children's appreciative mentality.

The Almighty Father is the most compassionate and He cannot do otherwise, as He most precisely understands the limitations of earthly finites and He knows the tremendous pull that

divine virtue of Love has on all life. He is also the limitless Banker of Love and, with this pervading universal gift of Love to the Creation for earthly existence, so many petty cheques are respected in His Creation daily. Thus, to the believers with faith, He can appear anywhere from images etc., since He sustainingly pervades the Universe and, to non-believers, He is not in the Church, Mosque or Temple and nowhere—a thief's thieving does not make him master of others' properties. Reckoning does come. The Hindus have an undivided blind faith in His oft-repeated Incarnations in His own Creations to establish Dharma (the codes of Religion) and tutor the erring mankind or even to please and satisfy His devotees.

Many unreasoned objections have been raised against this possibility of Incarnations or the physical appearance, in flesh and blood, of the Almighty in a finite understandable form for any of the causes mentioned above by the "almightists", if I may call them.

While they accept Him as the Creator of the entire Universe, 'the Almighty', they are not prepared to concede to Him the right to help and guide Creation by the use of material physical form for any consideration, even if it be for His own supreme will and wish. They say, it is impossible to conceive how the Almighty can become and present Himself in His Creation for the sake of His finite beings in a finite form.

Material prosperity on Earth generally breeds lethargy and laziness in Creation. This thought of shallow human weakness, to avoid all avoidable sweating toil, is applied to Him also and, thus, they wish to measure and read Him with their own petty ways and assert, why should He take this trouble at all? Is He after all so weak with incapable means that He cannot have His wishes carried out for Him in the many avenues of Creation, like a rich man does through his secretarial staff without personally troubling himself with them. Can it be that the Creation is really beyond His jurisdiction where His

wishes and laws will not work from a distance without personal supervision and inspection? Must the Owner and the Master, if He is one, be compelled to leave His luxurious abode of bliss and personally trouble Himself about these creatures on Earth? Surely not. The Almighty could not be so petty, so weak and incapable, when, in comparison, a finite man can have so many things done for him by others with his unquestioned limited capacity.

In modern times, a few coins can transact biggest businesses across the seven seas, have laws changed and decisions completely altered from one end of the Earth to the other. The finite man, with his transitory life and power, can do all these things without any personal physical trouble, sitting comfortably in an arm chair from his office-room with a telephone instrument installed on his table, and so on.

But if a speculative man, with his study of human psychology of this problem, gives this subject a serious thought to the various allega-

tions, he will be compelled to admit that the "almightists" senselessly ignore the deepest factor to all life in Creation, that of the personal touch, *inter se*, and, simultaneously, he will find, to his own amazement, that his correct conception of the Almighty is diametrically opposed to the flow of his belief and imaginations because you cannot honestly circumscribe, by your incomplete finite weak imaginations, His uncontrolled super-actions, the actions of that Supreme Being, whom you have already accepted as the Almighty, All-powerful, who is at absolute liberty to act as He likes in his own Creation which emanates from Him and through which He pervades to sustain and perpetuate it, untied by any conventions and accepted principles of Creation, to do in His own Creation what and how He chooses.

For instance, this is one of those futile senseless attempts, where the above-mentioned arguments, given by the "almightists," will never support those arguments with sensible reasoning

if we take him on, with logical and practical reasoning, in his own domain, the surfaces of mother Earth, as follows.

A rich man, prosperous, master of his home and grounds, wishes to personally attend to his furniture in his house or digs a flower-bed in his pet portion of the garden or cleans bits of jewels, may be polishing his cigarette-case with his own hands, or, personally attends with affection to his animals and pet birds etc. If, then, an argument is set up with that senseless obstinacy with the old question of, how can he do so when he has such an army of servants to attend to those various duties who eagerly await to fulfil all master's commands. In the same way, it is futile and unconvincing to say that the God Almighty cannot treat and look after His own Creation as He wills.

If it was really otherwise, as the "almightists" contend, the brightest gem in Religion of Devotion and Love—with an attractive hope of personal contact—would be eternally lost to Creation and would find no place in the library

of Religions. In fact, man, by this time after such an age of evolution, would have truly become a live-machine, paralysed in all his finer senses of sentimental emotions, thinking and acting like a wrist watch and thus be defencelessly exposed to face cruel Nature, unprotected, where the comforting shades of compassionate Love would be denied to him. The all-absorbingly attractive emotional sentiments of Love would be totally absent, in a word, unnatural, illogical and completely opposed to hard practical facts in Creation. Like a rich man who does not work in his garden like an employed garden servant all days and every day and only does so when he feels personal direction is most needed or he does it to amuse himself, so also the Almighty occasionally comes and manifests Himself on Earth as Incarnation to direct in an exemplary way His Creation or it may be to satisfy and please His devotees, which is, of course, not a daily occurrence.

Personal equations have weighed heaviest

in the life-story of the Universe and have altered entire destinies of individuals and nations and, I am afraid, they will continue to do so in times to come. Weak men, with limited powers of every kind, cannot be bound down to ignore the magnetic pull of personal attachments for the stiffest conventions, much less can the Almighty be bound to act as He pleases in His own Creation.

The wrong notions about the incompetency of the Almighty are not ultra modern. In fact, they have survived for a long time.

I am reminded of the most interesting and also illuminating bit of history of four hundred years ago in the reign of Emperor Akbar the Great. During his memorable reign, he shrewdly selected nine ministers of unquestioned intellect, nick-named as the Nine Gems (Nav Ratna).

The great minister Birbal, from amongst the nine, was noted to receive the honour of the Emperor's gracious intimacy and, many a time, friendly battles of wit were fought with most

amusing results. From them, lessons could also be learnt.

It so happened once, that the greatest Monarch of the Moghul dynasty, in one of his lighter moments of his otherwise responsible life, full of duties of his kingship flippantly remarked to Birbal, that the greatness and value of God, Almighty, as seen through Hindu eyes, had been definitely lowered in his own eyes since he learnt the episode of the famous Gaj and Grāh battle. He argued that a finite being, like his ownself, could carry out his wishes without, in any way, lowering his kingly position and, therefore, hoped that Birbal would also agree with his conclusions. 'Is it', he said, 'in any way, becoming for the Almighty to Himself run bare-footed, unattended, without a conveyance, in a desperate mood, to personally rescue an old elephant from the nearly victorious crocodile?' 'Believe me', he said that 'such unreasoned weakness can bring no credit to the Supreme Ruler and how glaringly does it reflect on His ministers and workers, when we

hear, according to the episode, that they could not be trusted to carry out this very small service for Him and He, having done it Himself, ridiculed and lowered His position in the eyes of His Creation up to a point, enough to shake faith and confidence in the Almighty.'

'You are a clever man and I do hope', he continued, that 'henceforward, you will choose a better and a more powerful God, One who can have things done for Him in a more dignified way. Give yourself a chance as a man, my friend. Put your faith in some one who can manage to do much bigger things by a mere hint.'

Birbal was speechless for a moment or two at the Emperor's remarks, so cleverly summed in a rational way. He bowed to the Emperor as was the custom of the time and humbly replied in becoming court etiquette, that he hoped to satisfactorily answer the whole question in a week's time, if His Gracious Majesty would allow it, to which the Emperor consented with a mean-

ing smile, confident in his mind that Birbal would be hard put to satisfactorily explain this great flaw in the Hindu belief.

No more allusions were made during the week on the subject, but Birbal, with his keen brain, worked a scheme in which a living example, he thought, would convince the Emperor far more satisfactorily than wordy arguments that invariably assume a tone of obstinacy in the absence of hard visible facts.

In the royal family, the Emperor was passionately fond of a baby nephew of his. This child was the recipient of all paternal favours of love. He was constantly with His Majesty who was never tired of tending on him and his wants. In short, he dearly loved the child. This was no secret from Birbal.

He, therefore, had a very good effigy of the princely baby prepared with correct size and proportions. He procured one of the prince's suit of clothes. He dressed the effigy in them and looked carefully at his make-up approvingly.

He sent this dressed effigy with a few selected attendants of the palace who were generally seen with the boy to finally complete the camouflage of his great plan. His instructions to those attendants were that, very soon, the Emperor would come out for a walk in the garden in a certain area for a little fresh air. The effigy should be in the garden beforehand with the attendants near a particular lily-pool. The face should be turned away from the path of the Emperor and when he, Birbal, with the Emperor, came nearest to the effigy, the attendants should discreetly push the effigy into the pond and, then, pretend concern at the unfortunate accident.

This well-laid plan worked admirably. The Emperor, not in the know of this subtle scheme, walked leisurely on the ground and merely looked at those few attendants with the effigy with a passing glance. When he was nearest the lily-pond, the effigy disappeared with a loud splash in the water. As soon as the Emperor realised what had happened, there was no holding him

back. Without a word or any instructions of royal commands to any one closely surrounding him, he was off like a man possessed towards the lily-pond. Birbal clung to the hem of his royal robes and pleaded to command him or any other numerous staff or attendants to do his bidding. 'We are,' said Birbal, 'ready to lay down our very lives at your command, why this excitement? Pray compose yourself and command us to carry out your wishes.'

But all vestige of composed reasoning was completely blown away by the overwhelming current of emotional love and, totally forgetting his august position of the mighty Emperor of India, he tore himself forcibly away from Birbal, pushed the attendants on either side, threw his kingly turban away and the weighty overall of his royal robes and dived straight into the water, to the very bottom of the lily-pond, only to find the sunken effigy of the child, for whose love all balanced reasoning and the exalted kingly position was so outrageously flouted.

He brought the effigy up to the surface of the water. He was bewildered, angry and amused at the same time. Birbal helped the Emperor out of the water, dripping and soaked. With profuse amused bows, he asked His Majesty the reason of his peculiar doings, complaining the whole time, what the ministers were for and the staff? They, one and all, could have plunged into the lily-pond to carry out his instructions.

The great shrewd man saw at once the cunning trick played on him and, after a few irrelevant joking remarks which is always Royalty's privilege to indulge in, on embarrassing occasions like this, closed the topic and went back to the royal apartment for a dry suit of clothes.

But Birbal, at the first opportunity he had, which he was often honoured to receive, again opened the subject pressing for some reasoned answer about the lily-pond incident which the Emperor was not keen to discuss but continued questions of the devoted and loyal minister, who

finally died fighting for him, brought the answer.

He confidentially told Birbal that 'the high and stiff duties of State are most powerfully binding but the duty of Love supercedes them. It is, in fact, the only powerful faculty which uncompromisingly dominates the whole Creation.' 'I know', he said, 'I was constitutionally wrong but if you were in my place as a human unit, you would have done the same thing', closing the answer finally by saying that 'care and protection of a really loved one becomes so sacred that it cannot be trusted into any one's hands, however able those hands may be.'

That very moment, Birbal was on his knees and said, 'Mighty Emperor, with all the respect due to you as a king and supreme head of the State, your personal position has gone up considerably in the eyes and estimation of us all and, may I add, in the eyes of all your peoples because they have recognised in you a most noble human being with a heart to love, compassion and

understanding to bestow on your peoples. Their respect and faith in you is stronger today after this discovery than it ever was merely as a powerful head of the State. May I, Your Majesty, ask you, yourself, if you will preferentially choose Akbar the Great or the Great Akbar, as a human being?' 'Your Majesty', he concluded, 'You have only a mere spark of love as a finite man and He is the inexhaustible reservoir. To those, who endear themselves to Him, He is constantly prepared to override all accepted conventions and perform unconstitutional, unnatural and un-understandable miracles for the sake of Love.'

'Rational and mechanical world, I know, would not be prepared to accept this kind of procedure as correct and, even, if some think it is wrong and is a fault to commit, it is within the purview of His many supreme fields of actions in Creation, which makes **Him** more dearly loved by the Hindus. He alone is totally unbound by any doctrines, thoroughly unconstitutional and all-powerful, with boundless compassion.'

The incident closed at this and Birbal was more honoured and loved by the Great King. Akbar was never serious about his joking remarks. His belief in God and all His powers of Love were beyond question in his mind. He merely wished to sharpen his own wits for his chosen ideal because he knew that the subtle Hindu mind will certainly have very good answer to this question of his, as experience had taught him during his great reign.

The best monarch of the Moghul dynasty was endowed with a rare combination of the qualities of head and heart, a military genius and a shrewd far-sighted statesman. His penetrating faculty of the study of the psychology of human nature and the individual man gave him almost an unnatural advantage for the success of his great Empire-building ideal. His manly courage of a chivalrous soldier produced in him an unbelievable capacity to trust blue blood families and understandingly atone for human faults and weaknesses. He fully valued the Eastern

psychological temperaments in his dealings with the aristocracy of India and his practical philosophy in his policy, in his dealings with this class, can be summed up by the words 'trust begets trust'. His most stubborn and courageous enemies of one time became his staunchest supporters and friendly allies and were responsible for creating and consolidating his great Empire. His great reign of human justice and fair play is looked back upon, to this day, with admiration and tender feelings of affection.

Remember, the divine current of affection and Love makes all life to go out of its way to do things for the object of their love and He, the fountain of this all-powerful virtue, cannot be denied this right. He is free to exercise at His will, according to His choice, at any time and place, the miracles of Love. If a finite man is allowed to do as he likes in his property and his earthly creations, what logic and reason can remotely assert that this is denied to Him?

Do not forget that He is the Almighty,

Omnipotent, Omniscient etc. Fortunately, Hindu mental vision has never been blurred by any doubts in His full powers in His Creation. In his search after Him, he has used all available help, presented by Nature, to get close to Him—the final aim of human life—and if he has used this priceless gift of the image to truly help him to focus his mental eye with faith on to the World-Spirit beyond, he has not erred or sinned in any way.

If that great friend of humanity is consulted, called commonsense, it will convincingly tell you that, in all journeys to any destinations of the most difficult type, to avoid failures, one should unerringly attempt them by the easiest and the most understood roads, aided on by all available sign-posts. The Hindu has, in this tireless search of the most hidden being, wisely taken the aid of the most understood physical form of images which he puts in his temples, homes etc., to powerfully aid him in aiming at the World Spirit beyond, of which in Creation he is otherwise

ignorant, with his definite boundary limitations of a Finite.

Men have to learn about and realise Him and the Hindu fully appreciates that the attempt to approach Him is complicated and, yet, most important, and that it can only be made through the only natural door he has been provided with and that is the physical shapes of himself and others on Earth. This search, once earnestly started, is propelled on, like all else, by that all-driving force of attractive emotional Love to the supreme stage of Love Divine.

I have again touched on this mystic subject of Love but I cannot help it, for Love is the truest manifestation of the spiritual reality in our flesh and bone throughout the endless march of lives with so many disheartening failures and, in the thousand and one unhappinesses, it is She who fends and fences entire life, in Creation. In Her compassionate arms, existence finds shelter from the rigours and cruelties of Creation and life is armed to similingly brave the endless

imposed conditions of arbitrary Nature and, even, the very fact of the evil of existence.

The image-worship of the Hindu is another essential in the glorious Hindu religion and, for salient reasons given above, it cannot be satisfactorily replaced in practice by any thing better to help real rapid progress and advance of the Soul. Some people entertain a wrong idea that the worship in the temple is offered to the image of gold, silver, wood or stone and not to the Spirit beyond. But the fact is that worship is really offered to the invoked Spirit only, and not to the material images, in the same way as we daily treat the earthly images of men, animals etc. In such wordly dealings also, the worship continues only so long as the material body or image retains life—the Soul and Spirit—and ceases when life has left it. Even in Ancestor-worships, the idea is the same. It is offered to the Spirit, the imperishable and undying Soul, which may have transmigrated to any place chosen for it by the Almighty in accordance with its Karmas (actions

done in past lives). The fact remains in Creation that man is the part and parcel of the whole. He dare not ignore one-half and not make use of such an important universal gift as the physical image, from which he himself cannot run away for choice and, therefore, he has wisely reconciled with this inevitable fact in existence for the ultimate ideal of the true spiritual end.

It is true that physical image is dispensed with in later stages but not until the Soul has reached that advanced stage, when man can put the whole temple in his thought and can perform his true worship entirely with his mental faculties. The same is practised in the created World. Those, who have not met or have not been properly tutored to fully appreciate any understandable picture within the reach of a Finite, such ideals and objects cannot be thought of, but when you meet as acquaintances first, which later ripen into friendship and even deep loves, the material picture of such loved ones need not be

in your physical sight but faithful Love is always potent enough to instantaneously draw it in the vast picture-gallery of memory, whenever affectionate remembrances demand it.

Ninety-nine per cent and more men are not highly developed straightaway, as is evident in all stages of education and, therefore, the material aid is indispensable to know Him and not to forget Him as an outworn superstition, as modern thought is trying to do today, with no reasonable and understandable substitutes within the logical grasp of the Finite, since the Infinite, the Almighty, Omnipotent, All-pervading is, for always, beyond the reach of the finite human capacity.

CHAPTER VII

THREE MAJOR PATHS OF SPIRITUAL ADVANCE

THE understandable all-pervading aspect of the Creator, His irrevocable relations with His Creation, the practical difficulties as experienced in life on Earth, their logical explanations, easy and natural solutions that this great Religion has to offer, have been touched so far, coupled with the indispensable driving force of Love minus which all action must cease and Creation come to nought. With this short and incomplete, perhaps vague, outline of the vast Sanātan thought, I will now proceed to briefly sketch the three principal paths of (1) Karma (a life dedicated to become perfect specimen of actions), (2) Upāsanā (the path of Love for the approach of man to the Almighty) and (3) Gyāna (the highest development of intellect to convincingly recog-

nize Him and return unto Him by winding up the cycles of birth and death with the final abode in Eternal Bliss), as they cover the entire field of spiritual advance of the Soul in Creation.

All variety constitutes the whole. The Sanātan thought has paid the greatest attention to help all. As the Universe presents several temperamental aspects of the human family, they can safely be compartmented under four commonsense headings. There are men who aim only at their own happiness; they are closest to animal lives and are bad. Then, there are those who aim only at the good opinions of others; they are weak and useless. There are those who aim at the happiness of others; they are virtuous and good. But those who aim at God are truly great. This is the key to Sanātan thought.

The first question, we all like naturally to ask, is why three paths have been prescribed instead of one straight one to simplify man's effort in his approach to the Almighty? The answer, by the old and experienced Religion, is

simple. It is based on commonsense and is fully supported by hard inevitable facts and reasoned considerations have naturally compelled the Hindu thought to logically accept these three paths instead of one because it is convincingly conscious of the glaring mental inequalities of varied choice, best suited to individual as a definite design in Creation by Him.

The Great Teachers were also intelligently conscious that in this short span of human lives, if the three paths were not isolated for the achievement of perfection, the danger of a likelihood of confusion of thought with the best of intentions would be difficult to overcome and man would not, as a rule, reach the final stage but end up by being a 'jack of all trades and master of none'. This important and far-sighted experienced vision is so clearly read throughout the fundamentals of this oldest of Religions and, in the great writings of the Scriptures, the authors artistically wove impressionably living mental images which life with its many and varied

experiences of physical senses and spiritualities had painted in their intellect and had engraved with faith on their intelligent impressionable Eastern hearts.

The above remarks are likely to confuse the reader in the correct understanding of isolating one road of spiritual advance from the other two, when we know that the three prescribed paths are rationally indivisible in the living unit of a being. By this, I mean that whatever road is chosen for choice, man must intelligently act for the love of any ideal, which means that 'Karma' is performed by acting, 'Gyāna' by intelligence and 'Upāsanā' or 'Bhakti' by the love of 'ideal'. But the Great Teachers have definitely isolated the three paths as distinct elements for the Spiritual Whole. So the real meaning of isolation is that the axioms of one 'ideal' should single-mindedly be pursued and the other two treated as necessary evils to be kept dwarfed to a size that would make it impossible for them to blur the clear outline of one's chosen picture of the

ideal. It is essential to clearly define this issue simply because so many people, out of haste or enthusiasm, think about and try and gather the choicest recipes, ingredients of all kinds of salts and sweets, for their own chosen dish about which they are not sure themselves. This well-meant cosmopolitan outlook for a single ideal detains them in their journey and finally ends up with the life-span by reaching nowhere. To further clear this argument, a rational example is needed and I will, therefore, say that a man decides to go to Bombay from Delhi to reach there in scheduled time. He buys his ticket for Bombay. The destination of Bombay is, then, his ideal and if he does not get side-tracked, stopped or delayed in his journey for any considerations, he will assuredly reach his destination which is the island of Bombay. While on his journey, he will have to pass so many places and stations and will do so without any attractions, no breaking of the journey on the way, but, all the same, he will have to pass them treating them as necessary

evils with only Bombay as his aim. So also, when any one takes to a spiritual road, best suited and liked by the Soul, he will have to isolate it for salient reason of the human span of life and avoid any waste of time to ensure against missing the time-table in the life-span.

All the three major paths of spiritual advance aim at sublime stages, where the Judge is the Almighty and, therefore, undivided single-minded effort becomes a *Sine qua non* for success. Even in wordly activities, we value specialists in all important medical, scientific and other technical branches more than the rest in the profession for any specialised disease. The specialist isolates for eye troubles as a special study and practice, but he also knows all other medical sciences like an ordinary doctor. So also, religious paths are thus specialized to ensure highest development and final success. The design of Creation is inequality and of varied tastes, so we must bow to it and intelligently

understand His wishes and work for final success of the Soul.

What is, then, the Creator's wish and method in Creation as mankind has learnt through countless years? It is that He is not prepared to alter or modify, for any considerations, the living fact of variety and inequality. In fact, His unbending nature has scrupulously avoided an exact double of any human beings, animals, birds, trees etc. Inspite of the powerful impact of modernity, He resolutely refuses to fall in line with the mono-model mass-production scheme of the lifeless machines or motor cars etc. He obstinately maintains different species with marked contrast in each of them and flatly refuses any such two wholly alike physically and, more so, mentally, even between twins.

In species, many wants and habits are common as a universal gift of Nature, such as hunger, sleep, rest etc., but, in these also, they are definitely of varied measurements. Nose, ears, eyes or other parts of the body are com-

monly shared in design but their exact counter-line is varied again. When we begin to generalise in the more important field of intellect, we are compelled to admit glaring recognisable contrast in individual tastes and temperaments and what do these natural contrasts denote? They bring home to all thinking men the unalterable truths, those truths, in fact, that we cannot alter or change for the convenience of your choice or unconsidered theories and, therefore, wisdom would counsel that we should not wisely ignore the fact that different temperaments must necessarily have varied choices and, therefore, real attempt should be made to ensure perfect fits.

Since the Eastern people have always valued the spiritual side more than the material, their natural leanings were to first satisfactorily cater for the spiritual mental side of Creation, convinced of the fact that all vibrations and movements in the material world are definitely directed by spiritual mentality. In this conclusion, the East will always be at loggerheads with

the modern socialists and their doctrines who have never attempted to probe beneath the skin of man into the vitals of Spirit, that Spirit which is the real life of all Creation. Thus, consciously appreciating the importance of the spiritual mental side, the Hindu has made a Herculean attempt to satisfactorily cater for different temperaments, faithfully realising the supreme necessity of appeasing the Soul's inborn urge of spiritual reconciliation in such a variety.

The East carries with it the longest traditional history of mankind, where mistakes by men and generations have helped to correct wrongs and have contributed so much to the world-history. Man and his inherent natural habits have always been the special subject of study by the Great Teachers to arrive at definite conclusions of the varied characters and the distinct habits emanating from them in clear contrasts.

Therefore, the Hindu belief has not altered by the passage of time in man's natural capability.

The Great Teachers of bygone ages have been confident in their studied conclusions that the infirmities in mankind, if allowed to deliberate and conclude decisions, unaided by higher spiritual thought, can produce no laws to follow which would really help mankind on the road of real progress and uplift, since, by nature, man is prone to attempt the life's journey on the lower mundane ideals out of sheer inherent animal selfishness and laziness and, therefore, it was wisely concluded that if the mental tuition is left in complete charge of rational and material laws only, man can never be conscientiously alive to his final responsibilities to the Creator and His Creation. He will, then, assuredly fall back to the level of savagery and to truly irresponsible animal life. In short, one who is not responsible to the Creator can, at no stage, be responsible to the Creation and, therefore, he becomes a mighty danger to society, instead of a helpful member to the human family.

If such an important factor was to be lightly

treated, there could be only one ending in human society and that would be a complete chaos in all human moralities of value at the dire cost of mankind and the most prized commodity, in man's possession, mental peace, will definitely disappear from him.

Modern society presents innumerable such cases daily. So many homes and hearths today hunger for more honest societies, in the absence of which they remain discontentedly unhappy.

The truthful sincere dealings between man and man are becoming alarmingly rare in all activities of life and when distracted Souls, under such conditions, turn with hope towards the one spot of refuge, their home and hearth, to get a temporary respite, they regretfully find in many cases that that, too, is mauled already by the touch of this so-called modern advance and civilisation.

Believe me, our good and pious ancestry was never frightened of anything more than of

godless creation because it rightly believed that, in it, will always breed the fatal germ to destroy humanity with all the most preciously prized traces of man's greatness, those great qualities, in fact, that draw a distinct and recognisable line between man and animal.

It, therefore, became absolutely essential to wholeheartedly attempt to wisely meet Nature's unbending habit of producing different temperaments and to honestly cater for all. It is for this hard fact in Creation that three major paths, instead of one only, were designed by those Super-beings in the past.

In doing so, they did not work in any haphazard way but they unreservedly applied their unquestioned mental energy to a deep study of fickle human nature, taking into minute account all the variety of inequality with peculiar tastes to help mankind on the right road facing the glaring human weaknesses and differences *inter se*.

CHAPTER VIII

KARMA

THE wide field of human thought and activity is covered by the three major paths of spiritual advance. They all reside together in the individual being and seem indivisible and yet the peculiar strength of one of them is generally stronger than the other two. Therefore, the strength of one over the other two, in the being, decides the correct aptitude of each Soul, as best suited to him, with far greater chances of success.

For instance, there are people on whom the influence of action and action alone is far stronger than others of different views and leanings. For such, the great road of pure and faultless Karma (actions) was put down, discussed with the minutest details, taking full aid with logic and philosophy, well within the reach of practical side

of human life, entirely theistic, not in any way opposed even remotely to the natural laws of Creation and the Created, fully helping the Karmakāndi (a being who adopts with faith and resolve a life of pure Karmas or actions throughout the life-spans) during each span of human life in its uninterrupted journey through transmigrations in the evolutionary process in Creation.

Those, whose choice it has been to take to this road, have to exercise great control over all their actions in their recurring 'Karmas'. They have to carefully discriminate and masterly direct the three kinds of 'Karmas' of thought, word and deed. All the three contribute to the full list of Karmakānda (the active practical dictionary and diary of all actions). The wide field of human actions from the three functionary centres covers the whole list of Karmas for mankind. All phases and plates conceivable shall remain within the boundary of Karmakānda. It is true, the three kinds of Karma emanate from different centres but the locus of the three is the same man.

The thought, tongue and limb action have their separate functionary quarters to act from but, all the same, they all belong to the one being. The three of them are powerful in their own domains and even if one, of the three, is loose harnessed and allowed to act irresponsibly, however correct the other two might be, they will also be influentially compelled to sway and be side-tracked from the right road of progress.

Physical actions are more easily controlled comparatively and this becomes the first lesson for the schooling of the **Karmakāndi**'s Soul. If a man has a spicy temperament or is a slave of acquired habits where any such habits have created deep ruts in the Soul's temperaments and if those habitual actions are not accepted by the dictionary and codes of true **Karmakānda** (set laws accepted as correct), naturally the controlling and the directing of actions becomes most difficult. If, therefore, spicy temperaments choose this great path of Karma, they will find it an uphill business to continue to their journey's

end successfully, unless they are determined to correctly tone down their spiciness and acquired habits unsuited to correct Karma and doggedly adhere to the prescribed exercise to eliminate those weaknesses from their temperaments and be prepared to recondition their actions according to the laws accepted by the religions of the Karma path.

Even with the best intentioned resolve to control and direct Karmas, constant surroundings, like all else, play a great part in moulding and exercising correct Karma.

People, who are prone to give vent to their tongue, are in danger of being carried away by its loose use on to wrong paths and may have to face the disaster of falling from the ideal of their final goal. Uncontrolled sharp-tongued people will, therefore, find it difficult to consistently control it and direct it to their journey's end.

The third and the most important phase of control is the thought wave of the being and that is the most difficult of all, because, the untiring

'Mana' or the mercurial suggestive centre of *Sankalpa* and *Vikalpa* (the restless, tireless thought centre of all emotions and sentiments including all unconsidered thought-waves, the very preliminary vibrator and driver of the human thought-world) is, by its own inherent nature, most restless, entirely fickle and very short-sighted and yet the fact remains that it is the most live and powerful centre in the entire human being, without ready and active help of which all mental activities would assume a stage of perfect inertia. It is truly said by the wise that if this one centre becomes the obedient slave of the purified and tutored intellect, the grim battle of the world is won.

With all its priceless and lovable qualities of inestimable value to the Soul and Spirit of man, it is really a naughty boy, always wayward as a child, so full of whimsical mischiefs, unbelievably obstinate, constitutionally soft and sweet as an alluring woman whose wants and demands must be met at all costs irrespective of the merit or

the demerit of the indent, easily coaxed, but difficult to permanently entrap and enslave. It runs away without due notice to the reasoned intellect. Greatest care and farsightedness of the highly educated intellect (Buddhi) is always necessary to wisely but with a kindly restraint, guide it along on the right road with a studied knowledge of its inborn nature and, during the process of tuition, to scrupulously avoid inhuman drastic measures that are likely to drive it into desperation—a stage where all traces of considered views are totally absent—into final irresponsible revolt, because a heart, once given, cannot be taken back and a tormented heart always bears the scars of spiritual injuries which are apt to disfigure the otherwise pure and beautiful Soul's intellect which emanates from Him for correct, intelligent high duties expected of man.

Since, it is of unparalleled importance to the being, many remedies and treatments have been prescribed by the Great Teachers. One common

one is that if its perpetual mate, the 'Nirmal Buddhi' or 'the purified intellect', can influentially educate this great centre, control and correctly direct its boundless energy, it can truly help man to obtain anything he can conceivably aspire for. With such a unique roll-sheet, it is the 'Mana' or the 'Heart' alone, which can be the most prized friend man can ever hope for. But, on the contrary, if it is irresponsibly loose and, thus, allowed to travel on its general thoughtless pursuits, it may land you into difficulties from which there may be no escape and, therefore, it also can be your most dangerous enemy.

This all-important centre has truly perturbed the Hindu mind more than anything else and, therefore, the Hindu, in the past, has been a most tireless researcher in the discoveries to devise means to truly win over the aid of this greatest of all man's faculties, with perfect remedies, to be successfully used on the various roads of real progress and advance.

Today, unfortunately, the present world

atmosphere has made the schooling of 'Mana' far more difficult than it has ever been in the past because of the associations and constant irresponsible surroundings.

With the unquestioned influences for good and bad, if instead of a disciplined and rightly tutored centre it becomes unavoidably unashed due to the modern times, it assumes the roll of a highly troublesome, argumentative and obstinate faculty which must necessarily hamper and retard the real progressive goal of man. The dangers of the numerous infirmities of man, in the world, are habitually ever present and wisdom would always counsel that they cannot be ignored or lightly treated in the present atmosphere.

I have particularly explained and emphasized the importance of this vital centre, the 'Mana' or the 'Heart' of man, in Karmakānda as compared to its importance in the other two paths of Gyāna and Love.

The reason of such an exhaustive and preferential treatment of 'Mana' in the path of

Karmakānda is due to its inborn nature and its comparatively uninfluenced and unfettered existence in the human unit of a Karmakāndi.

In the remorseless path of Gyāna, it is either successfully and forcibly fettered and thus rendered thoroughly impotent by a heartless iron will or is totally murdered for all intents and purposes and treated by the Gyāni to the end with complete contempt and is thus rendered ineffective. Similarly, in the path of Love, it is attractively led into captivity in the temple of its Love from which it dare not go out in cases of true love and, therefore, it no longer wanders about as a gentleman at large to flippantly choose its weird and changing fancies but, only in the path of Karma, it has to be treated as an important fighting colleague continually and has to be systematically vitalized to make it possible for the Karmakāndi to attempt to direct its active energies to perform Karmas with full and laborious aid of a tutored Buddhi where only friendly persuasive advices can influentially guide it,

harnessed with intellectual and convincing reasons.

In all life, two kinds of mundane ideals guide man, the lower and the higher. They are of a permanent everlasting character and move about in the lives of men as twin sisters, either of them eager and ever ready to step in by the side of man whenever an opportunity is offered and having once got into step with the being, either of them influentially directs his footsteps on to their own path in the march of human life, as easily on one as on the other. One elevates you and the other pulls you down in disgrace and unhappinesses of many varieties.

The boldest and the most convinced advocate of modern progress and advance cannot honestly deny the fact that the human thought-wave, generally, which directs all avenues of man's activities, has not been loosened and polluted today under the influence of the machine-age.

The well-tried and accepted fundamental

obligations of various human moralities, under the modern cry and practice of liberty, have definitely affected the lives of men adversely. The axiom of modern liberty means primarily that men are released from religious and moral obligations, the many accepted codes of honour and chivalry. The modern laws of today have replaced sacred laws from Religions and are primarily meant to protect the material non-spiritual side of man and they have succeeded in evolving a set of rules where spirituality and all its obligations, including Religion, are absent, or, where an attempt is half-heartedly made to keep in the religious laws with the others, they have been so mauled, disfigured and distorted by the senseless vote of so many ignorants that they, no longer, retain the fundamental features, essential for Religions and, instead, the fashionable terms are used by the framers of modern laws of meeting the modern demands, or they emphasize that reforms are so necessary to answer the call of the times and sometimes add, "we have wisely com-

promised on reasonable logic of 'give and take' and so on." But all this generally destroys the truthful fundamentals and Religion cannot compromise on essentials or else it will not survive.

Man, after all, as he appears in the world, is not entirely of material clay. He is composed of the material body as well as the spiritual and the Spirit inside him as the master of the being. It is, therefore, the Spiritual peace which is the greatest possession of the Soul and this can only come from unpolluted or undistorted pure Religion.

But, with the modern advance and civilisation, man is daily becoming more and more hasty and restless and thoroughly unhappy, because the material modernity is a foreign land for the Spiritual Soul.

In this irresponsible age, such an atmosphere provides an ideal hunting-field for that restless enigma, the frisky and the childishly whimsical heart of man. It has discovered, in modern civilisation, its greatest friend and ally

with no serious mental conundrums to learn and act on and finds itself free to chalk out and fulfil all its weird whims in a real happy-go-lucky fashion without even a suggestion of check on the lower mundane ideal, itself wholly inconsiderate by any thought that this road would debase mankind and systematically murder that precious human element, which alone lifts him over the lower creation.

Hard and unbending facts in Nature are not going to oblige either the irreligious, unspiritual modern prophet or the childish heart of man and, therefore, man will remain what he has always been, a mere creature in Creation as the rest of them and all animal passions, though checked and curbed by religious humanity, are there in him in a dormant state kept in their places only by codes of honour and Religious Spirituality. But, under the aegis of the modern freedom and driven by the irresponsible 'Mana', man will, under such circumstances, always become prone to the vices of the lower mundane ideals and thus

unconsciously swing back to the original level of savage beasts.

Under the various liberties, its many slogans and practices, modern man is fast progressing on that downhill road which will soon land him in miserable depths.

Such are the many difficulties, presented to the travellers of Karmakānda (perfect disciplined actions) in the present generation in the lap of modernity. Those, born with Karma temperaments, would choose and attempt this journey but many feel today that owing to these very adverse environments it is shadowed with doubtful misgivings of a successful ending. Temptations against perfect disciplined Karma, today, are all most overpowering in these times.

However, temperaments with strong tendencies carry with them from past lives their inherent choice for Karma only. They will not shirk from their chosen ideals of their selected path of Karma. It is, therefore, only fair and just that even with such glaring handicaps

provision has to be made to cater for them and this has been carried out with the keenest intellectual effort to help them on in their chosen ideals, instead of denying them the real spiritual help to further their inborn urge and, thus, literally driving them into the agonising deserts of atheism.

The present age undoubtedly handicaps the Karmakāndi's programme but, with the illuminating guidance of the Satguru (Spiritual Teacher) or the constant associations of the Satsangis (spiritual elevated company) or with the abnormally powerful resolve born with the individual as a legacy of the Soul's past Sanchita Karma (treasure of disciplined thought for correct Karma, accumulated through past lives), he may attain his journey's end successfully and appear before the Almighty Father with pressing recommendations of his own well-fought Karmas on the battlefield of Creation, physically, vocally and mentally and, thus, present himself to the Judging Father *as a flawless specimen of action*,

ready to merge back again into the faultless Perfect Being, severing his connection with the imperfect world, if he wishes to do so. If successful with this final goal, he will annihilate the recurrence of transmigration and, thus, wind up the trying cycles of births and deaths into the final abode of Bliss, unless, of course, he wishes to continue his great career for the good and service of his fellow-beings and Creation, which is also open to him to carry on.

This, in short, is a brief outline of the great theory of Karma. The habitual variety of Creation has denied this great road, of real advance and approach to the highest ideals, for universal application.

Each Soul will have to question itself, what suits its inner urge best and those, that are worthy of this great path, will perseveringly stick to it.

I have pointed out the great end of the Karmakāndi and those many difficulties that he will have to surmount, which the modern age has

multiplied for him to choose and decide for his own future and his final fate.

By giving this outline, I hope, it may prove to be of some slight help to the Karmakāndis in their journey for their laudable goal that they put before them. In their final decisions to select this road for themselves, supreme sacrifices of all personal whims would be essential to perfectly discipline all Karma, willingly performed and offered at the altar of their chosen ideals for their final aim.

Thus the Karmakāndi has to fight a life-long battle, with himself and his surroundings of the World, with the severely uncompromising weapon of strictest tutored discipline. While doing so, he will generally have to numb the palate of so many human weaknesses inherent in man's nature and march on, in his path of life, as the finest disciplined soldier imaginable.

CHAPTER IX

GYĀNA

AFTER this short outline of Karma theory, I will attempt to discuss the great doctrine of Gyāna or the Torch of true and everlasting unchangeable knowledge.

In that powerful ray of highest mental light of true Gyāna, all misgivings, misconceptions, in the shadows of uncertainties of transitory natures disappear and the true everlasting unpolluted knowledge, in all its brilliant purity, helps those that are designed by influences of past life to travel by this road towards their final ideal and end.

What is really meant by true Gyāna and what does it truly denote and work for? What are its allies and enemies? This is now to be discussed in the lines to follow.

Literally Gyāna just means 'Knowledge'

but knowledge is as varied as it is humanly imaginable. Knowledge, at all times, is interesting and tantalisingly captivating universally. The whole world, in fact, has to be learnt with absorbing interest by all Creation. Mysteries within mysteries are hidden from the physical eye and mental conceptions, since it is a master production of the net-work of His all-powerful captivating Māyā (the transitory veil of ever changing highly enchanting mythical scenes in Creation). So, this general expression Gyāna, for the great Vedānta Gyāni, is a very different subject from that commonplace expression of mere 'understanding faculty' of multiple objects in Creation.

Real Gyāna of the Vedānta philosophy has to be achieved with the strictest Cross of self-denial of the alluring senses of the World through the physical body of man for the conception of that one ideal which I shall try and describe in the discourse to follow.

The uncompromising aim and ideal of a true

Gyāni will refuse to accept and to waste his time on any of that superfluous knowledge of the day to day general fund of knowledge which may deter him on his chosen road.

Knowledge, therefore, has to be bisected with a definite partiality for the one and the only aim the Gyāni has for his final target. In doing so, the Gyāni divides knowledge under two heads:—
 (1) for the use of himself and his aims and, (2) for the use of the rest of Creation, superfluous and binding.

Gyāni's selected knowledge takes him towards his goal where he finally wants to permanently unite himself with Him away from Creation and the other kind of knowledge, in his eye, is just superfluous for others who get bound to Creation for Creation's sake. This superfluous knowledge, which binds you to Creation through attachments, is finally disowned and discarded by the Gyāni under his keen eye of strict discrimination of perfect Tyāga (total renunciation of the world of senses).

According to the version of the Scriptures, there is always the Vidyā and the Avidyā Māyā —the true elevating knowledge and the superfluous cheap and lowering knowledge. True Gyāni's real faith is that the only knowledge of value, worth acquiring and accumulating, leads the Gyāni direct to Him, along his chosen road, to his final aims and ambitions and the other road of knowledge, if he acquired by mistake, would assuredly stand in his way and bind him down in the superfluous changing Creation with no question of his final release. It is this very disease of the superfluous knowledge which the Gyāni is determined to abolish and overwhelm under the dazzling ray of real and everlasting truth, that unchangeable truth of eternity which is indestructible and can only be applicable to Him and the Soul of man, which is also a live particle of the unborn and undying World-Spirit, unchangeable and perpetually everlasting.

He alone is the everlasting, beginningless, unchangeable and endless. His knowledge, there-

fore, is the only true knowledge, since He is perpetual and unchangeable, permanently in eternal bliss. It is to that undying, perpetual Being the Gyāni aims at, logically tutoring himself to realise that only two, out of this entire Universe, are everlasting unchangeable, the Supreme Spirit of the Universe and Its live spark in the Soul of the Gyāni himself. To the Gyāni, this phenomenon of the separation of his live spark in his Soul through the accident of Creation is to be put right by returning to its parent Soul of the Almighty, disconnecting his ties with Creation in every way. The rest, even his much cared for body, is transitory and destructible and, therefore, superfluous (Mithyā), unworthy to take into account and an unwelcome destructive prison-house of matter for his Soul, a real enemy of his great aim of final release. Any attachment to his earthly body or its wants, for physical happiness and attachments, would bind him down in Creation of birth and death where compulsorily he will have to go through the recurring

process of transmigration, which the Gyāni resolves to terminate finally.

Like the inborn faculty of Love or the urge to act for Karma's sake, this thirst for the Gyāna knowledge remains dormant and submerged in the blissful innocence of childhood and, according to the Sanātan belief, the first rays of discriminating knowledge only appear at the age of five years. The development in the individual is according to the influences and aptitude of the Soul's past Karma.

The general and superfluous knowledge, just for knowledge's sake, develops in all beings in the ordinary natural way but the peculiar taste of the knowledge of the true Gyāna is definitely an acquired choice, influenced perhaps by the Soul's experiences in the past Sanchita Karma (or the accumulated influences of the past actions).

The main target the Gyāni aims at, is the complete annihilation of his attachments in the superfluous and the changing objectives in

Creation which, once fully achieved, would automatically stop transmigration, since it is the attachments on earth which recurringly pull you back, again and again, into the world of births and deaths. His firm belief and faith is that even a mild suggestion of attachment would bind him down in the superfluous and changing objectives in Creation and, thus, totally defeat his one chosen aim of permanent blissful liberty of 'Moksha' (liberated release of the undying Soul into the domain of Eternal Bliss) from this painful world of births and deaths.

No one, therefore, who has a warm accommodating heart suited to love and attachment, should ever attempt to travel by this short cut to the highest stage of liberated bliss, unless he deliberately wants to court a failure with consequences of real disaster.

Although it is a fact that all men, generally speaking, are born with a warm beating heart with the inborn faculty to love but extreme cases are meant to bring out contrast to prove the rule

and since no hundred per cent temperamental law can be applied to the diversified Creation of multiple character and choice, peculiarities like this are essential.

By saying this, I do not even remotely suggest that this great path is, in any way, inferior to the other two. In fact, because it is unnatural and therefore difficult, the one, who can accomplish this journey of Herculean sacrifices successfully, must be considered to have a very great Soul, armed with an iron will, resolute intellect, where all whisperings, tender and emotional, of the heart, habitually full of affection and love, continually influenced by deep sentimental attachments on Earth, are totally ignored and the Gyāni keeps his intellect entirely free and unfettered to focus its total energies on to cold discriminating knowledge alone, nullifying the entire world of senses in the created World.

The sole object of the great Gyāni is complete sacrificial annihilation in himself of the

entire Universe, as seen and felt in the world of senses, in a final attempt of complete release of his Soul from all bondages of attachments in every way. If this is not fully achieved, the wheel of transmigrations, through worldly attachments, will not stop for him and he will be pulled back, again and again, into this transitory ever-changing world of births and deaths. His great goal of Moksha and the final release will assuredly fade into oblivion. This unnatural and callous resolve is resolutely practised, unabated throughout his most difficult journey. Any slackening or modification of the cold resolve, that he vows to maintain unimpaired for any considerations out of the long list of countless attachments on Earth, are fraught with gravest dangers for the great travel on the path of Gyāna.

Thus the perfect Gyāni presents to the rest an awe-inspiring picture of unnatural renunciations. In his great travel on his chosen path, he is wholly absorbed in sublime meditations, yearning for that perfect released peace, which only

dawns with a final annihilation of all passions and desires of the Earth. The whole Universe, as seen and felt by the rest, falls into complete insignificance for the great Gyāni under the unbending stern eye of elevated Gyāna, where the multiple and the beautifully attractive pattern, created by Him under the direct supervision of His great Mahāmāyā (His supreme faculty of the Goddess of all Creation) with all the innumerable attractions of countless details and expressions, are totally erased in the Gyāni's intellect, for all intents and purposes. His elevated Buddhi (or the fully developed Gyāna intellect) is no longer influentially diverted and disturbed by any of the attractive worldly details and, at that stage, the dominant and continual ideal of pure elevated mental faculty suggests with irresistible force, to the Gyāni, the complete immobility in the entire Universe into a truly lifeless Creation in the otherwise live and moving World and the total disappearance of the 'Jagrit' or the world as the senses find it in the world of

experiences with influences of emotions and sentiments, so dear to the soft beating heart of man.

To him alone, all is at rest, no suggestion of movement of body or mind in his great Gyāna vision and to him in the rest of the world also.

• In short, the World is totally erased for him, barring only two lives and vivid things in it, the Universal Spirit and its Spark, that of his own. This mystic ideal, to the rest, is sought by the Gyāni with passionate tenacity in a single-minded hope and effort of final Release from all activity with an unshakable faith of entering the region of that perfect peace, which passeth all understanding, to which the great Gyāna philosophy applies the term of prized “Nirvāna” or the Great Moksha, the final liberation from the very evils of existence, in a word, Salvation.

Such is the brief picture of the path of Gyāna. Few, if any, are made by Nature to pursue this most difficult road and are, what one might really say, truly suited for this most difficult

journey to a successful ending, particularly in this restless and hasty World of today.

Many unsuited temperaments for this great path look upon this choice of *Gyāna* as rather selfish, where self-emancipation alone dominates all else.

Cold reasoning is ruthlessly applied to totally erase the Universe of the senses that are not of a permanent nature and, therefore, termed and accepted by the *Gyāni* as superstitiously superfluous. This ever changing and unstationary Creation, though beautiful and attractive, has no use or attraction for him. His mental eye of *Gyāna* remains uninfluenced in his elevated *Buddhi*, the intellect, and is permanently fixed solely on to the indestructible Soul of the Universe and his own, both unchangingly everlasting and undying. All else has to fade into the oblivion.

Though proclaimed a short cut, it is potent with gravest dangers of slips and fatal falls, when account is taken that His entire powerful *Māyā* has to be completely subjugated and finally

destroyed to reach the journey's end successfully.

The causes, that can prompt such a choice, will for ever remain a mystery to the rest and one can only attribute the Gyāni's choice to a stage of complete resignation (or of extreme Tyāga) of the Soul where perfect disgust of the World has entered into his very being, best judged by the Gyāni himself, or it may perhaps be due to recurring failures and the unbearable painful sufferings in the cycles of births and deaths, where short-lived blissful attachments of the Earth in Creation prove, in the end, too disgusting and unbearably heavy for the Soul to repeat again and again, creating, in the Gyāni's Soul, a resigned obstinacy of shirking all personal sacrifices for the sake of Creation and only thinking of self-release at the cost of all.

Unlike the experiences of Karmakāndis or of devotion 'Bhakti', the Gyāni, having once attained his final stage, remains a hidden mystery for always to the rest. Like dead men tell no

stories, so also Mukta or finally liberated Souls are no more in touch with the world of births and deaths. Their last chapter of Creation and evolution, in transmigrations, has finally closed.

Inquisitive habit of man is constantly and laboriously engaged to unravel the mysteries of Nature and has partially succeeded in discovering so many but, in all his efforts to read the final picture of completed Gyāna, he has hopelessly failed just because Mukti (Moksha or Liberation) is beyond Creation.

Although the last stage of Gyāni remains obscure to the rest, the Hindu has tried to discover something of the interim period during the journey to be able to faintly realise the great picture of completed Gyāna which I have just described above and the nearest approach, of that stage, is supposed to be the stage of deep Samādhi (complete union of conscious and subconscious mind) through various spiritual exercises of saintly trances, slightly resembling the chloroformic fainting stage, when conscious

realisation of physical body is numbed under the influence of the anaesthetic.

Since Samādhi is not confined to any single path, it is practised and beneficially used by all principal paths during their various patterned exercises to recharge and recoup vital energies to life with such perfect rests.

It so happened once that a great Bhakta, devotee, used to indulge off and on in Samādhis for the sake of his physical health in which complete rest and peace is guaranteed and he used to describe those periods of trances as moments of incomparable restful peace.

His disciple heard with rapt attention the description of those peaceful carefree moments by the Great Teacher and was compelled to satisfy himself by putting a straight question to the Great Teacher and said, 'Tell me, my master, if those super periods are so wonderful, why does any one choose to come down to the Earth of smiles and tears, instead of staying there in so peaceful and attractive an atmosphere?' The Great

Teacher, with a meaning smile, answered and said, "My child, it is a matter of pure and simple varied individual taste," and concluded, that "some may like to become sugar itself while there are others who always like to taste it and I, for one, am one of those who would sooner taste it and, therefore, I like to come back again and again and again." Here, then, is a complete answer, why even the sublime Moksha (blissful release of the Soul from all painful bondage) is not chosen for choice by all. Indeed, in the path of Love, it has little value as compared to its own chosen roads of *Love Divine*.

CHAPTER X

UPĀSANA : *Bhakti or Love*

THIS third great path of 'Bhakti or Love', then, should have as great or even greater attraction for mankind just because it is adopted for preference by the majority over the others. In all activities in human life, popularities and unpopularities denote approval or otherwise by the data of supply and demand and the census of successes or failures confirms human reading with hope and faith on to any path in life. 'Bhakti' allures the largest numbers, not only on the above-mentioned causes but also because it is a spontaneous inheritance of the Soul. The faculty of Love is inborn with life and few, if any, can wholly escape its pervading influences.

What is Bhakti? How does it commence and travel? When does it come? This is now what we should try and discuss.

Bhakti (the Love) in its many stages and forms can truly be termed, in a word, as "a divine mystery". It is inborn with the birth of the Soul. It is instinctively and actively present in all beings all the time and, yet, it is not ostentatious. Ostentation denotes infirmity of the essential, like an old tried Indian saying which so correctly says that the flame of Love is very similar in its qualities to Earthly fires. So long as it keeps on emitting ostentatious smoke, the real fire is still in the making only. And the pure and staunch flame comes only when smoke has disappeared, so also in true Love, smoky ostentation disappears in the flame of Love.

Unlike the path of Karma and Gyāna, where effort and practice propel you on in the progress of their respective paths where meritorious recommendations by logical reasoning help to consolidate faith and progress in them, Bhakti appears quite unknowingly and spontaneously. It is so strange, in fact, that a reasoned logical activity by the being, which helps you in the other

two avenues of your spiritual progress, actually fails in Love, *for Love can neither be applied with well-thought reason nor, having once arrived, can be taken away by all persuasions of high logic and herein lies its unfathomable mystery.*

“ It is present even in that glorious period of wholly irresponsible and absolute innocence of the earliest childhood, that attractive period which, when once passed, is always regretted in after-life, because it was the best portion of the span of life, unpolluted and undisturbed by any considerations, truly lived in the kingdom of lovable innocent bliss, for innocence is bliss, the opposite of the blissful all-knowledge.

The seed of Bhakti is, therefore, not an imported item, foreign in any way as an acquired taste later on. It is spontaneous, a natural habit of the Soul, rationally unreasoned yet magnetic and magical.

It germinates with the birth of the Soul and grows in the Soul of the Bhakta into the mightiest

fruitful tree, the Soul can conceivably dream of. Under its comforting shadows, the Soul relishes that attractive solace of painful magnetism, which can never find adequate expression by human tongue or through the ablest pen.

Because the magnetic wave of Love absorbingly submerges the entire human Soul in such a state how can the Soul's live message be truly described with lifeless objects like paper, ink and the tongue of flesh? Letters make words and words make phrases but can one ever transmit Soul's deep and powerfully magnetic feeling of real Love? Spoken words and written description are not enough.

By its inherent nature, it preciously hides its presence in the being with masterly tactics, like the prized treasure of a miser, yet occasionally, a word, a name, a sight, or even at the thought of the beloved, warm tears give away the sanctified secret of the heart of a man which is the abode of Love, that Love which is beyond the faculty of reason, wholly unbound by any codes of law,

responsible only to itself, independently advances, unaided by any recommendations of common-sense merits, totally blind to all earthly dangers of Creation, paralysing all centres of physical pain in the body of the *Bhakta* (Devotee) and finally overwhelmingly drowns him in the limitless sweet ocean of true Love, where all ripples of fickle emotion and sentiment are at rest, where the Bhakta is completely deaf and wholly immune to all praises and abuses of his fellow-being, ecstatically contented and happy in the depths of that immeasurable sweetness where even the otherwise proud and imperishable human ego of distinctive Self is totally and willingly submerged without regrets. It is, in fact, the only faculty which overwhelmingly dominates all Nature.

The whole life-span of the Bhakta is passed in a warm comforting atmosphere of sentiment and emotion, rather than in the cold regions of undiluted logic used for Karma and Gyāna.

The development of Bhakti is categorised under nine heads or stages expounded and ex-

plained by the great Hindu Teachers, known as the 'Navadhā Bhakti'. Under these nine heads come all the phases of mystic Love, from the simple commonplace of 'attractive Love' to that sublime stage, I have mentioned above, of 'Love Divine'.

Although, as I have said above, Love remains an unopened bag of mystery beyond the deciphering capacity of human intellect, yet, the chief indication of Love to the being, when it germinates, is one of fear. It is a strange thing to say but it is true because the fear is not of a kind which one entertains from a feline tiger, panther etc., yet, a real fear of offending or not pleasing the loved object. This fear pervades through all Love on Earth and beyond. It may be for earthly passionate loves or for Love Divine. Earthly wants are catered for more easily and the other is more difficult because one has to put on permanent spectacles of Religion of highest spirituality to read life and follow what you read.

The world of experiences is undeniably cruel

by nature and all life, consequently, has to go through its rigours but, only in the path of Love and throughout her progressive stages from passions to paramount sublimity. She is the one who has all the alluring attractions of the gentler sex in Creation, fascinating and magnetic from passions, that only last a day, to Love supreme which outspans chains and chains of transmigration and, during this period when sweet life is consistently handicapped by habitual cruelty of Nature, Bhakti alone is optimistically comforting, never tired of clothing hard unpalatable facts of Creation in picturesque guises to console and cure the painful sores continually inflicted by Nature and, in Her ministrations, She is solely aided by repeating vivid pictures of Her own sweetest experiences of Love, thus occupying the Bhakta's mind with hopeful mesmeric amusing memories, just because it is Love and Love alone which compels one to forget oneself in a chloroformic stage to numb and pacify the painful sores in life.

The Karmakāndi and the Gyāni, after big set-backs and slips, find themselves in agonising difficulties of extreme dejections and such periods of failures sometimes end the career of those two great paths, but Bhakti, unlike those two, has a different story to tell.

After natural shocks and set-backs, which Nature is ever ready to experiment on all beings, the Bhakta remains undejected, in a highly chastened spirit, happy with the dreams of his beloved, perhaps a little humbled occasionally but optimistic of tomorrow, chasing away all the heavy moroseness of life's many set-backs in this imperfect World. During these periods of great affliction of the Soul of man, She is never lacking in Her tender caresses like a true mother and continually feeds the Bhakta with the never failing tonic foods of Her own life-giving nectar—the milk of fragrant Love. Bhakti by its inherent nature carries with Her one of those motherly natures that is more ready to comfort than to chide.

In the other two great paths, of Karma and Gyāna, set-backs and falls often prove fatal. The Bhakta, on the contrary, thrives on them. All set-back periods are looked upon by the Bhakta as precious school-hours, hours of preparation and memorising to face the final examinations, one day, in the presence of that Examiner Who is the reservoir of all faculties but, to the Bhakta, the Personification of Love alone.

The students know full well the taste of those tantalising painful sweet uncertainties that precede the examination where success and failure, hand in hand, look you in your face, so full of hope and despair.

Examination halls in modern institutions are really very different from the hall of study of that sacred subject called Love, where the subjugating currents of Bhakti is the subject to learn, because the Supreme Examiner, in this unpolluted sacred temple, cannot be compared with our earth-made institutions with a mere shallow man as your examiner who gives you marks to pass or fail by

examining your writings on material paper and ink, written by the material hand and under the gaze of the material eye only, totally unconscious of the pupil's mental emotional centres that function in an electrical stage.

In this mighty sweet path of sacred Love, the examiner is not that callous routine-bound task master of the modern university for the teaching of the lessons of materialism with only slight traces of human sympathy and affection for the students. These men-created schools on earth have examiners who carry out their duty of examinations for the sake of lifeless money only, for otherwise they are ignorant to discern the inner recesses of the sacred Soul of man.

But, in the other hall of examinations, of Bhakti, the reactions, in the student and the Examiner, are entirely different. During the trying periods of examinations, the Supreme beloved Examiner is not unaware of the cruel commotions of rough and stormy scenes, ruthlessly enacted in the softest chamber of the Soul, that great room

where all emotions and sentiments of pure Love of the heart of man so freely function.

It is the most sacred precinct in the human unit, a real temple, in fact, which is always so mysteriously obscure and so closely curtained from the cold gaze of material eye. And yet the fact remains that it is the most gorgeously beautiful chamber, has unlimited powers and patents in it and is a selected corner of sweetest luxury which the Compassionate Father reserves for His own abode, *a discreetly secret meeting-place of the Soul of man and the Soul of the Universe*, known as the 'Mana' or the heart of man.

It is in such surroundings that the Bhakta enters into his final examination hall to passionately seek his final spiritual reconciliation in a true spirit of self-sacrifices and surrender through pure devotion where, if anywhere, the unbending and undying human ego (the Ahamkār of self) is totally humbled low in complete self-surrender on the high altar of Love Divine.

It is a commonplace accepted principle in all

life that one, who is subjugated, is weaker than the subjugator. No other path in the entire spiritual field can even remotely claim such impossible results of events as the path of Bhakti does. It is claimed by facts that the true Bhakta can virtually dictate not the Almighty Dictator but the All-compassionate Being, the real owner and master of the limitless treasure of Love, the one and the only God who belongs to the Bhakta.

As the Almighty Dictator, He has roped securely the entire Universe with imperishable chains that none can hope to undo—His eternally awe-inspiring chains of bondage of Father Time. Time (or Kāl) spares no one from its habitual destructive exercises, not even a huge range of mountains composed of hardest rocks, yes, even they must bow to the dictates of Time (great Kāl). He, the great Father, holds the strings of Time in His own fingers and, with these, the entire Creation is securely strung with. He dictatorially carries out His own wishes at every yard through His sanctioned laws of Karmas and Samskāras,

those laws that are unalterable even with the aid of all intellectual human ingenuity, but it is solely through Bhakti that His mighty unbending laws alter even the great Kāl or Time which is held up and is delayed in its routine. He then happily modifies them in answer to the pleading of His devotees.

To the Bhakta temporary failures do not deter him from his chosen goal because in these set-backs, the all-consuming pure flame of true Love is not lowered or extinguished by the adverse raging storms of His great Māyā in arbitrary Creation.

That flame of devotion keeps alight and burning. The devotee and his ardour for the great goal, that one and the only aimed goal of magnetic Love, is not singed or destroyed in the burning flame of Love but only pessimism and set-backs are consumed. The Bhakta, therefore, has little fear, compared to the Karmakāndi and Gyāni of losing his path in the darkness of suspicions, miscalculated misunderstandings—because

the pure and permanent flame of true Love lights his path, dispelling all darkness, suspicions and uncertainties—or, as in other paths, the potent dangers of critical discriminatory arguments of cold logic and law which is apt to be read differently under the ever changing state of intellect influenced by circumstances. The pure flame of Love consistently lights his path independently of rational reasoning and his precious treasure of Love and undivided faith always remains within his reach for use to consolidate his unshakable belief in the boundless compassion of his Beloved who is ever ready to become unconstitutional and lawless for the sake of the ties of Love.

Indeed, the unparallelled chapter of Bhakti is strewn with striking illustrations of events where, even the powerful Karmas and Samskāras are rendered ineffective in their devastating effects on Creation, simply because the great Law-giver, the final Sanctioner of all destinies, is so influenced by that all-powerful current of Love that even He is compelled to override accepted principles

and conventions and displays definite and unmistakable partiality in altering His accepted decisions. All such lawless decisions are glaring examples of influenced and partial judgments. They are contrary to the strict codes of Karma and Gyāna. Such extraordinary rationally unreasoned events exhibit themselves as living facts before the eyes of mankind with most influencing prominence and they deeply affect the inner resolve.

Many of us are put to hard thinking if any other path, save this, is ever worth attempting and whether the other great paths were really meant to aid mankind in any satisfactory way and are not after all diversionary pastimes to rarely entertain peculiar temperaments and, finally, if after all, this is not the sole truth that the "Spirit of God is Love".

In the life of day to day existence, events and experiences stand out as living facts in the form of sign-posts to guide mankind in his travels through life.

In the great chapter of Bhakti, innumerable instances tutor us by facts in miracles and the greatest amongst these has been that the Creator and Supreme Ruler who unsparingly binds and guides Creation is Himself bound to His real devotees by the strong silken strings of pure Love. He has to literally remain constantly with His Bhakta, watching over him with His infinitely compassionate eye, satisfying all his whims, many of which are against His logically created and sanctioned laws of natural Creation, happily performing innumerable lawless miracles to please and satisfy some one so dear to Him whose loveful heart He is frightened to hurt at the dire cost of His lawful justice of sanctioned Nature.

Yes, it is a living fact that all supernatural miracles are entirely in opposing contrast to the natural lawed Creation and it is, also, a fact by historical events that He, the faultless Supreme Ruler, happily allows miracles performed by his blue-eyed boys at the cost of His laws and

justice, as read and understood by the rest of Creation.

All principal Religions claim to believe in miracles in all ages. To the rational material brain, they remain mysterious accidents but such unsatisfactory assault on the fact of miracles does not lower their value in the eyes of the spiritually religious people just because few ignorants senselessly assert to disbelieve them.

Such is the wide scope of Love with almost unlimited powers in this otherwise Karma Samskāra and action-bound Creation of the Creator, in which, with the perpetually moving, everlasting string of time, His Kāl (Father Time) binds the whole of His wide Universe and He alone retains the duty of the sole and the only Moulder and final Approver of destinies and all events that are to process during the perpetual motion of time in the unknown future.

He, the great Father, unborn, without an end, Who has no earthly limitations, the Almighty, Himself, gets firmly tied to His Bhakta,

subjugating His otherwise natural laws for the sake of His devotee, allowing ununderstandable miracles.

That all-pious Being, Himself, gets definitely arrested not with strong steel chains and armours but with the softest imaginable silken ties of magnetically attractive highly intoxicating Love Divine. Thus, the mightiest free Being becomes a willing prisoner and, in that confinement, Himself contented and happy in his comfortable clean chosen home of the heart of man, so brimful of His love.

What wonder, then, if the whole Creation is literally driven by that all-potent energy of Love in its limitless aspects and phases.

No corner of the Universe can escape its pervading dictatorial influence, nor is it ever capable of refusing the commands of pure and unsullied Love. In fact, where force has completely failed and lies defeated, Love has conquered and won.

In all life, plants, insects, birds, animals and

finally men, attractive Love governs and all life must remain obedient creatures of this Divine Virtue. Man, being the most intellectual, has used it in the highest ideals of Spirituality.

In all affairs of the world, which is continually in motion with the string of recurring events in lives and their repercussions in the experience of senses, Love alone guides all men in all their activities in every walk of life—family life of love ties, love amongst friends, love for money and profit in trade, love for sport in travel, love for statesmanship and politics, love and attachment to the valuable possessions of the world the home, love for animals, birds etc. In fact, all other items in the faculties of Nature may be absent but not attractive Love.

Since the field of Love is so immeasurably wide and the dominating influences of emotion and sentiment so fully occupy directing control over the most powerful human centre of the heart of man, rationally unbelievable scenes are enacted hourly.

The mother's hair-raising sacrifices for the offsprings, enacted in the endless reel of Love, are definitely beyond the faculty of reason.

As compared to the man, the women are far more receptive and, during all ages of virtue, have proved even better than men in the ideals of high altruisms since, by their inherent nature inborn in them, they are gifted with immeasurable treasures of emotions and sentiments, the real driving force in Creation, a big live bag of potent, soft human energy, a fact which the gentler sex is fully conscious of, which she so freely exercises in her relations with man for good or for bad. The mighty man, the slayer of tigers and lions, the hero of battle-fields, the being with a powerful detached intelligence and independent habits, the wielder of the mighty sword, the inventor, the author of the Vedas, the muscular professor of manual labours and manly sports, in fact, the virtual driver and master of the active world is, so often, driven himself and subdued, not by any overwhelmingly powerful weapons of war but

only by an unbelievably soft object, a mere drop of water—just one tear—from the eye of a devoted woman. The most considered and solid manly resolves are melted with that tiny bit of liquid, a truly unexplained and ununderstandable mystery of Love, which dominantly influences life, which has puzzlingly befooled and mockingly defeated highest codes of logic and reason. Many potent secret weapons in wars are daily invented that temporarily dislocate well-laid plans of offence and defence by the most experienced military commanders but antidotes to all such handicaps are systematically discovered and used with success. The real antidote to effectively neutralise the power of offence and defence of one little tear, which I may title with the name of 'mighty atom', has not been found yet in the long history of mankind. This weapon of great power in the natural armoury of the so-called weaker sex is unbelievably effective for constructive and destructive designs in human life and, consequently, in times of corruption and vices, when

religious moralities slacken and are to be shared by women with the rest of the population, they are worse than men.

I know that the modern suffragette and their systems will not agree with this conclusion but the Hindu faith has an undivided decision on this important point and has only arrived at this finding by its deep and consistent study of human nature in men and women.

Since the woman is accepted to naturally have far greater reservoir of emotions as compared to man, therefore, if her superior passionate energies, in contrast to man, are uninfluenced and unaided by less passionate, far-sighted and calculating healthy restraint of man and allowed to function entirely by powerful impacts of emotional impulses, painful calamities are apt to dim happy careers. I cannot say that all men are wise and far-sighted and all women the reverse of them, but generally Nature will endorse the averages, as I have described above. The Creator has, therefore, designed man to balance that

danger and has put man by her side as father, husband, brother etc., to affectionately help and guide that great feminine energy with far-sighted views so essential to all lasting happinesses.

If, by good fortune, families and societies maintain high moralities with the aid of religious spiritual sanctions, the gentler sex, in other walks of life also, astounds imaginations, where, as wives, with their highest and purest religious faith of unparalleled devotion, they resolutely brave and happily give up their own precious lives to avoid separations from their husbands who are, to them, their one and the only temple of sanctified Love on the Earth and beyond.

As sisters and daughters, they present examples of highest filial obedience and affectionate companionship. As such, they are generally cut adrift from their parents' house by marriage into other houses, yet, they unconditionally remain willing to do all they can for the house of their parents. Such highly chaste lives, led by so many daughters of this land, have confirmed the Hindu

belief that the gentler sex is endowed with far greater emotion and sentiment than man and the titles of goddesses, Durgā, Lakshmi etc., are given to them in Sanātan families.

They are consequently treated with great respect for their matchless qualities of chastity and clean devotion. Like the image of man, which is believed to be after His own image, so also, woman is described as a real *Shakti-roop* or the very image of highly potent goddesses (the inspiring centres of all emotion and sentiment personified in human images for all activities in Creation).

They, by nature, perform the highest duty of His Creation, as creators of men on Earth as mothers. They remain, when grown up, indispensable mates as wives, as sisters and daughters, they are the most fascinating decorative companions, after man's chosen ideals of life on Earth.

The active calculating man, in all his undertakings in various fields of his multiple life, is directly, in one way or another, influenced and helped by the gentler sex, without whose constant

helpful company, man's efforts in life would come to a full stop, because, if the gentler sex is taken out of his life, who has he to work for? Even in his prized home, he will be the loneliest creature on Earth, aimlessly toiling like a machine, with no corner in this world, where gentle affection could be given or received.

The Compassionate Father has designed the woman to occupy the place of such importance on Earth to complete His masterly design in Creation. Since, she is the better-half of the man and has fulfilled her role in the history of the World, she will occupy, in the future also, most important position and history always repeats itself, for if we only gaze with our mental eye and scrutinize the pages of human history, we will find that the root cause of the most awe-inspiring events, events that have completely changed the careers of individuals and nations, actually altered fates and destinies, the central figure, somewhere, the very driving force at the back, was always a woman.

Even, in the day to day ordinary life, men toil for the comfort of their homes, because in them, with the inmates of gentler sexes, all worldly happiness lies in those bits of his Soul, known as the members of his family, who, as mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, are ever ready to overwhelmingly reward the toil-tired man with the unique precious feminine affections of Love which, temporarily but repeatedly, appease the inborn urge of his Soul—"Love given and responded to"—with the purest of motives and this little transaction in family life stimulates him like a tonic in an unbelievable way and reconditions him into actions for each rising sun of the morrow, toiling, sweating and braving all difficulties in Nature for the sake of his own home, sweet home and its inmates, and so this world goes on, year after year and century after century, sustained and helpfully supported by this everlasting divine virtue of Love in all stages and phases in human life and, even, in the rest of life, birds, animals etc. Since this mysteriously divined gift is inborn in all life

which propels the world, it can truly be accepted as the universal driving force of Creation.

As such, it must be accepted that it is all-pervading but, here again, like the rest of the habit of Nature, the distribution of this great virtue is varying, differing in intensity, choice and selection, as is the world's inherent habit, like good, poor and varied appetites but those, that are blessed in abundance by it and are not of a dry mechanical nature but possess human affections, generally develop with the growth of the Soul and if that same Love is applied towards the Great Father, it develops to stupendous dimensions of Love Divine.

One has only to study the student-life in his progress of lessons from alphabets to final degrees in University career. The first alphabets of A, B, C, are learnt by students, not with logical understanding but with faith and tie of the teacher and the taught, since the teacher says and they believe that those queer lines denote A, B, C, and finally they are assimilated into the mental body

of the student where he becomes fully conscious of the A, B, C, never to forget again; so also, Love, from its A,B,C, develops on very similar lines into the higher stages.

It starts from the most preliminary attractions and finally blooms into the highest form of Bhakti, provided it is exclusively pursued on the road of high mundane ideals and is not carelessly prostituted in the lower mundane aims.

Although it is instinctively world-wide, the Hindu thought and culture does not accept it to be totally applicable universally. Other temperaments, with varied tastes of Karma and Gyāna, do appear and, therefore, must exist. For them, suitable avenues of development and advance have been provided by the vast Hindu Religion but it cannot be denied on facts and numbers visible that, of the three great paths, Bhakti is the most popular and has produced Souls, all along its long long history, of outstanding merit whose achievements have been recorded and believed in the pages of the eternal Religions.

The greatest and the most fascinating road of Bhakti is undoubtedly the most compassionately tolerant. It is not confined to any selected set or sect of men but it is truly universal. Even the great caste system does not stand in the way of its general application to entire mankind. The origin of the path of Bhakti has remained untraceable in the old Religion of the land, because this virtue started with Creation and is, therefore, so old and also because, unlike other Religions, the Sanātan Dharma's ear-marked birthday is lost, perhaps, never to be found by any one in the oblivion of the hoary past, where human memory of recorded history and, even, of fossilized relics of bygone ages provides no satisfactory clue, reliable enough to assert that the first real beginning of this Eternal Religion was in such a year or, even, a period.

During this unthinkable age, it is worthy of note that no period has been totally empty of the Bhaktas, while there have been times when Karma and Gyāna have seemingly disappeared, temporarily.

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT BHAKTAS

(Soordās ji, Tulsidās and Rāmkrishna)

EVEN in this unvirtuous age you can find Bhaktas of very high order and, not hundred years ago, the great Rāmkrishna Paramhans of the city temple of Dakkhineshwar in Calcutta truly startled the populations in this land of ours, where men like Swāmi Vivekānand of international fame paid the highest tribute of the Soul of accepting him as his master and himself as a true Indian disciple. A little further back in the Moghul period, there were a largish number of visible great Bhaktas and the giants, at that time amongst them, were Shri Goswāmi Tulsidās Ji and Shri Soordās Ji. Their memorable works in the field of Bhakti are undying. Soordāsji's famous Soorsāgar and Goswāmiji's priceless Rāmāyana and Vinayapatrikā are works by

themselves, the parallels of which are most difficult to find.

They embody in them, not only the fascinating songs of Love Divine, but are the works of real master minds, where their scholarly pens have not missed any important phase of human life, no word of human wisdom has been left out, all important phases and points of the vast Religion have been most elucidatively touched.

With a big list of such serious subjects, their abnormally super-brains with a high standard of Bhakti in them, these works that they have produced are throughout coloured with scholarly artistic touch and poetic eminence which makes them, not only not heavy reading, but absorbingly interesting.

These great Authors' greatest achievement lay in the fact of the use of a most simple language and, therefore, they remain, even today, within the intellectual reach of so many and, through these master strokes of the Authors, all these beautiful works are best known, today, in

the huge populations of the country, so easily understood. From them, full spiritual benefit is derived.

By this foresight in the compilation of their memorable works, they have truly immortalized themselves and their priceless works in the annals of Sanātan belief and they will shine for innumerable generations, without rusting.

There is not a shadow of doubt that they both have been very great scholars but the knowledge and the learning, they accumulated, was never parroted like the common run but was studied with deep insight and, after having mastered the vast field of Religion as a whole, they chose for preference the path of Bhakti, where they have excelled all known poets in the past several centuries.

These poetic writings are saturated with highest delicacy, for in them they have most skillfully strung the beads of supreme Spirituality, Religion, all human codes of honour and morality, summing up their poetic picturesque picture

to clearly define the most practical side of existence in Creation.

They have drawn along it the picture of habitual cruelties of Nature, the inherent weaknesses and faults in the Created, their effective remedies, rightful earthly devotions and the devotion Supreme to the Almighty, farsighted statesmanships with colouring of politics, science and meteorological and astrological conclusions. While working on this elaborate design of thought, they have presented, as living similes, distinct peculiarities of the six seasons in the year as Nature has designed them and is supposed to use them in relation to life on Earth. They have not missed the vivid descriptions of animal life, birds and plants etc. In fact, they have collected in these works all that is worth knowing for man's use with profit to him materially and spiritually and, yet, those master-minds have drawn this elegantly elaborate picture on the one big canvas of Love Divine with infinite sweetness and attraction and with very high poetic art.

Anyone, who has properly studied them, can have nothing but highest praise and the deepest praiseworthy respect for the Authors and to all their priceless literature.

Since their entire life-span was dedicated to religious spirituality of Love Divine, their Souls were unconsciously elevated to great heights. These two great Souls had reached a stage when they could safely be termed as real **Mahātmās**, attaining that coveted position which is so deeply appreciated in the East and India from times immemorial.

Their attainment in the high spiritual fields gave them, as it gives all good **Mahātmās**, a third sight which penetrates through the curtain of future and focusses on to times and events to come. They have alluded to what they saw in their prophetic dreams clearly in their writings. While doing so, they very clearly alluded to the times we have entered into today. Warnings and suggestions are all listed in them about the adverse period for religious spirituality in a

fervent hope to minimise the dangers that mankind will have to face in the populations of India.

The unquestioned noble effort of theirs has raised undying monuments to the glory of the country of their birth. It is always a proud privilege of a country to boast for centuries of its few selected Souls and only such Souls decorate the name of a country.

That semi-divine foresight, reserved for saintly personalities, made them terribly anxious about entire mankind, on account of partial or complete loss of precious religious beliefs in modern man. They were fully conscious of their own transitory existence in life and, in an attempt for the love of the future generations of mankind, they have bequeathed their memorable works in that simple language which is within the reach of so many, instead of writing high Sanskrit, because they realised that the vast volumes of sacred Scriptures would become sealed books to the majority, in the times we have entered. The fatal consequences of the absence of such an important item

in men's lives, they never underrated because, in it, they saw the virtual ruin of the very Soul of priceless Humanity.

Of these two, Goswāmi Tulsidās was the greater being. Many, today, believe and rightly that his Soul was the greatest that has appeared in India in the last thousands of years. His Rāmāyana and Vinayapatrika have found no parallel and, even in the future, are likely to find none. All praise to him for his priceless gifts to us and to Him also, Who sent him down to India as real Saviour to man. He was a real genius and geniuses never create anything. They only reflect what they have in them. His warm and delicate emotioned sensibilities and his detached vigorous intelligence produced those jewels of his works. So many great scholars have put their master pens across the pages of books with unquestioned force and high literary art, but those do not so penetratingly appeal to the *reader's heart as Goswāmi's pen does and the secret is that, to be really effective, literary compositions*

must always be sung from the Soul of the author and not merely written with a scholarly pen. Goswāmiji sang it with faith from the deepest part of his heart and Soul. The one and the sole guiding star of his life was the path of Love. To correctly picture his beautiful life, as perceived today after four hundred years through his fascinating writings, it can be summed up thus and said that Love and Love alone was the romance of his youth, the consuming passion of his prime and the unforgettable memory of his declining years of his span of life.

It will be interesting to note that these two great Souls, with their immortal works attached to their undying fame, reached this high spiritual stage after a colossal mental upheaval where the root cause was a woman, the outstanding custodian of emotion and sentiment.

Unlike the strict disciplined 'Karma', where even a trace of heart's freedom of sentiment and emotion is denied, or the remorselessly cold logical path of dry 'Gyāna', where His beautiful

Creation ceases to exist, the compassionate and understanding 'Bhakti' gives shelter to the largest number of all kinds in Her tolerant Motherly caresses. Her super-feminine tendernesses, for all times, are marked as real oasis presenting the most inviting places of refuge to so many stricken Souls in arbitrary Creation. It is Bhakti alone which gives such under-dogs a heart to face and brave the cruel rigours of fate, fate which is inhumanly arbitrary at times, shielded and protected only by that powerful, pervading armament of soft Love.

This delicate fortification is very similar to the sandbag protection where destructive high explosives of modern armaments fizz out and are rendered ineffective and the pneumatic cushioning of soft sweet Love serves as the greatest shock absorber against fatal injuries to the Soul.

CHAPTER XII

BHAKTI CLARIFIED

SOME careless observations have been levelled against this greatest and most widespread path of 'Bhakti' as being a lazy man's job, bereft of bold Karmakāndi's active life of self-reliance and totally blind to the glaring logical independent eye of 'Gyāna', where dominant self-courage, determination, destroys all Creation for preference of Self. But this is certainly not true of 'Bhakti', because there must always be courage to do and knowledge to discriminate true love from false, the real difference being that whereas those two are primarily for the Self only, this is at the cost of Self for the beloved in so many forms and stages. The driving force in Bhakti is unquestionably more powerful than in the other two. It can never be branded for selfish Self but is entirely in the selfless service for the temple of your

Love, that Love which has never been fathomed by mankind so far, and for the nobler courage of self-sacrifice for the others.

The word 'surrender' tickles the imagination of some of the critics who try to belittle the greatness of 'Bhakti-Mārga or the path of Love' but, really speaking, those that run down the path of Bhakti are themselves ignorant of this sublime path and, if they can persuade themselves to apply commonsense reason to understand its high principles so courageously followed by the Bhakta, they would definitely alter their opinion.

For instance, the very principle of self-surrender is impossible if the Self is in revolt against the being, obstinately defying the Self for higher Self, as a great writer has observed thus "if a man cannot raise himself above himself, how poor a thing is man," and if the self is not fully subjugated, as the willing and loving slave, to be offered, courageously in the highest sacrificial spirit, on the altar of love. Those that

have conquered Self know full well what courage and determination are needed with infinite patience to suffer for some one else. So, if looked at with a just and unbiassed eye, 'Bhakti' never lacks in courage. The Self courageously suffers itself for the sake of his Love and this self-suffering, braved by the being, cannot be termed as lacking in courage. How many hair-raising sacrifices have been happily accomplished, for the sake of Love in the past, is difficult to enumerate and, even in this otherwise fallen age, it startles mankind to witness the force of Bhakti and Love, and in the ordinary life of day to day existence, rational commonsense makes it definitely difficult to understand. It is the most practical road to travel on in spite of all the modern difficulties because, with the inborn heart to Love, a wide field is always open to advance and to progress to the furthest points of highest Spirituality.

The alphabetical practice-ground is consistently provided in God's own Creation on Earth.

So many homes provide ideal environments through earthly attachments of Love and hintingly point towards the higher Love beyond, because I believe that family ties as well as deep and true spiritual friendships can be as pure and sacred as the precincts of a temple, only if the inmates of a home exercise this great virtue of pure Love in family relations in all the phases of their respective relationships.

If they so attempt it, they will primarily have to keep the unerasable fact of the Creator's design undisturbed, in evolution. The principle of the selection of Souls, discriminately used by Him, will have to be the paramount consideration, in which all relations are justly put by Him which differ from one another, as father and son etc. It is no myth to say that at least fifty per cent and more of the modern man's worries are directly due to non-compliance of the divine law of relationships, where the divine writ of family discipline is lacerated, fully aided by modern laws and, consequently, countless cases of husbands and

wives, fathers and sons etc., pass the entire span of lives with bleeding hearts of perpetual remorse and regrets. I know, this old idea would not appeal to the modern socialists, who are incapable of study and understanding anything beyond the physical body of matter, only because they are innocent of Religions and the wisdom of the great Souls as authors of these, and, even, the combination of the being of Matter and Spirit is described by them as a natural accident of birth, which is totally wrong.

All thinking men have always been convinced that the travels of Souls are directed by Him and, therefore, each Soul, sent into families in a particular place of relationship, is by Him and His wish and cannot, at any time, be construed as a natural accident.

In spite of the socialists and atheists, He remains real master of all Souls, Who, according to His own designs and sanctions of Karma and Samskāra, correctly distributes Souls in families at the appointed place and time and, likewise,

takes them away at His own free-will and choice. Those, that have this higher vision of the Creator's handiwork in Creation, soon realise that the mighty proud man has to helplessly bow to His dictates in this awe-inspiring transmigration-game of the musical chairs in evolution. This great game of musical chairs is unalterably designed to continue to the last day of Creation's life, but how many Souls, nurtured in modern atmosphere, are blessed with a conscious faith that, at the termination of each round of the music of life, the umpire will greet you with a rod or a prize.

The inborn Love is constantly present in the being and is capable, in this wide field of Creation, to select and choose from, for the practice of his great virtue, easily in the family and friends' circles first and, then, to finally grow into the mightiest tree. The path of Bhakti remains open to all and for all times.

This, in short, is a brief outline of the three important paths of approach to the great Father.

All Religions point towards Him through various codes of development of Spirituality, accepted in practice from bygone ages to aid real human progress. Hinduism has perhaps been the most fastidious and deeply concerned to keep alive and nourish Spirituality, without which the Eastern belief is that the precious human Soul of man must die with all its laws of humanity and greatness.

In the hopes of permanently safeguarding this peculiar treasure to man and humanity, Hinduism has the proud privilege to so masterly put down these three great paths instead of one only, thus catering for the universal uplift, applicable to all temperaments.

Nature's unalterable habit of varying choices has not altered and is not likely to alter and this wide attempt, by Hinduism in the fields of Spirituality, has been made with unselfish hopes of truly keeping alive the real human beings, and not mere men in physical shapes only. What greater Universal service can any people boast of

as compared to this, since this is the truest service to the undying Soul of man, his real Self, as compared to the socialist doctrine of service to the outward material body of man, which is designed to disintegrate into the elements of the Earth at the inevitable end of each span of short life?

CHAPTER XIII

MODERN CURRENTS AND EFFECTS

I know and realise that these short essays in this small book are inadequate even as a remote help to understanding and profitably appreciating the undying and vast Eastern spiritual cultural beliefs, recorded in our sacred Scriptures. The four *Vedas*, the six *Shāstras* and the eighteen *Purānas* (the Hindu Scriptures) are the principals and many commentaries for different schools of thought serve the variety of choices. Goswami Tulsidās's famous *Rāmāyana* and *Vinayapatrika* and Surdasji's *Soorsāgar* have the essences of the holy Scriptures and, above all, is the Holy 'Gita', which is the highest and truest Gospel because it is compassionately given to us by no less a being than the God-head Himself and, throughout the discourses of the Holy Gospel, the Unmanifest, the Almighty takes a second place to the manifest

God-head Himself. Over fifty commentaries have been compiled of it and more commentaries may be attempted but who can claim to decipher the real mind of the Almighty Author, because the inexhaustible reservoir of intellect was the sponsor and author and the students and readers are only limited finites.

In them, today, lie buried priceless treasures of the greatest value, unfortunately beyond the reach of the modern man. All I ask is that if questions crop up, which undoubtedly there will, to the correct appreciative understanding of this wide and important subject, do not, I ask you, throw away Religion in despair and confused intelligence because it is definitely man's and humanity's greatest treasure and the only friend of his real self—the Soul. I will, therefore, beseech that those in doubt may profitably seek the aid of learned teachers to dispel those misgivings and day to day questions commonly levelled at those truths in this modern atmosphere of rank materialism and frail faith.

To life, the real Self of man, those undying truths in our great Religions can alone give real peace and contented happiness. Ignorance of many so-called teachers has definitely produced perverted pictures of Spirituality and, even, of the faultless Religion itself. Do not, therefore, get wrong impressions of the truths of this old and so well-tried spiritual teachings of the great Sanātan beliefs.

Good teachers are always to be found, if properly searched. Of course, they will not be found through the advertising columns of the newspapers but only if a real personal search is made for them.

Personally, I rightly feel that I have neither the learning of a scholar nor the practice and experience of the spiritually developed man. Therefore, these lines are meant only with a hope to touch vaguely the outlines of the ancient Hindu cultural thoughts of inestimable value to mankind in an honest attempt to rouse in you a feeling of inquisitive inquiry which only the great

Pandits will satisfy, because the subject and the thoughts, that I have attempted to write about, are essentially Eastern which the Eastern tongue, so easily and expressively, explains the real meaning of and their subtleties and, in this book, I have used the Western language, only to make it faintly understandable to those, within and without India, who have not the benefit of knowing the Eastern languages.

If I was to give up the idea of even a poor attempt like this, I would have felt guilty of not even attempting to do my duty to the fellow-being. Many friends of mine have continually asked me for some such book, which could give even a faint idea of the mould and the outline of this oldest of Religions. Incidentally, it will also help the modern student from the Universities to get this faint outline of the spiritual side in the Hindu belief.

Having made this crude attempt, aided by my poor pen, ignorant of the Scriptures and learning of this vast and scholarly subject of the Hindu

culture, a culture which has touched in its wide field of research every human phase in existence with satisfactory answers to the many plates in human life, I have merely to assert that all the answers, given by this old Religion to the many phases in human life, remain unalterably true and if study and interest is shown by honest beings, they will find the truths and correctness of our great ancestral researchers.

It is my cherished hope of interesting the reader in this valuable treasure left to us by our forefathers. If I fail to rouse the interest I anticipate, all my fond hopes will fade into thin air, because, when I consciously focus my eye at the huge tidal wave of modernity which seems bent on sweeping away, from the man's conscience, the most prized element of true spirituality, it appears that, in its attempt, it has succeeded to a degree. If they accomplish this material programme over the spiritual treasures of value, I am as certain as I write today, that mankind will definitely lose every legitimate right to belong to a human

family, because I see in the modern thought a calculated and systematic tendency to destroy all traces of Religious Spirituality, thus denying to the Soul of man, the human being, its vital food of life.

If this coming tragedy is not stemmed with resolve, mankind must rush down on the road to lower mundane ideals of 'Avidyā Māyā.' I have referred to the 'Avidyā Māyā' previously and, now, I shall openly say, where this good lady takes you to? She can only lead you to one destination where nothing but regrets will await mankind and this destination is the savage region of animal life for all intents and purposes, bereft and shorn of all nobler moral qualities that man has proudly possessed in all his precious human greatness that has elevated him above the lower creation. I have all along been a believer in the eating of the pudding and not so much in the recipes.

Believe it or not, but it is a fact that the greatest judge of Creation 'Father Time' will

make us swallow the bitter and depressing pills of continual failures to achieve real peace and happiness, which we all instinctively yearn to possess through the material means today. All efforts to hide the real programme of modern lifeless advance will finally fail, as they have failed up to now, to satisfy the inner urge of the Soul of man and the naked unbecoming picture of crude lifeless mechanical materialism must eventually come face to face to some one, who is never meant by Him to be even remotely related to a lifeless machine but alive with a beating heart and a live Soul inside and in spite of the many translucent curtains, cunningly hung by soulless politicians and lawyers, the truth will be understood by man one day, because the wisdom of intelligent human species will penetrate through it to discern realities with genuine despair and, may be, with the final revolt of the Spirit.

Awakening will assuredly come to intelligents, but when is the question. Soulless materialism can dazzle and befool many people for

some time, but cannot befool all peoples for all times. Mankind has already suffered very great losses of unbelievable magnitude in callous wars and exploitations and has been literally starved of Spirituality for quite a long time, until we have reached the stage today when any further delay in right thinking will become positively dangerous for spiritual faculties of humanity.

Even in the Western countries of mechanical fame, there is a definite awakening since the last century. Many thinking men have, in one way or another, loudly protested against the callous machine-age, because they have proofs and brains to realise that the promised human millennium is not in sight anywhere and all, that machine has succeeded in accomplishing, is truly starving mankind of all Spirituality.

The modern materialist is never tired of singing the praises of the marvels of machines and has spoken and painted such beautiful pictures of man's future existences with the aid of

machines and material only, but what has actually happened is that material discomforts have increased with comforts, misery along with ease, speed of communications with bewilderment and folly, power of construction with the power of destruction, means of cure with means of moral and even physical suffering, because the older generations did not use the aspirin cachets at every yard etc., and this gives you a clear picture of the sustaining qualities in mankind today, as compared to the bygone ages.

With this daily panoramic picture of existence, the thoughtful amongst us have been compelled to swallow their pride of the so-called material civilisation and advance and many more honest hearts have seriously begun to wonder whether the modern advance and civilisation are really a sane programme for mankind.

If there is any likelihood of turning the living human being into a lifeless machine, this modern thought of advance will survive, otherwise, which is more than likely, the whole idea

of today will have to radically change for the better, with the aid of Spirituality.

If any of you, readers, would sit quietly for a few moments to focus your attention to gaze into the mirror of history, you will soon realise the unqualified importance of spiritual tuition in human lives to maintain and perpetuate man's greatness, without the aid of which, the very position he occupies today in Creation will be definitely lowered to levels, that would give us all an anxious thought.

All modern ideas of progress, measured by pig iron productions, will lose their mental market-value of the modern civilisation as a real profit for mankind and will not be able to stand on their legs with convictions.

The daily fiction of attempting to cheat the sacred Soul of man with bold-lettered advertisements of hourly new discoveries and devices of materials only and forcibly asserting that those material gains are truly going to elevate and help real progress of man will, doubtless, cease and

the numerous programmes to truly enhance the methods of unbecoming servitude of Spirit in the name of civilisation by lifeless materialism will not be advocated with the boundless insincere propaganda of pen and tongue.

The material side is a necessity but its usefulness will only remain so long as it is kept in its proper place as an important second mate to the spiritual human being.

Man may use the material advance to material ends only with profit in the material gain but not to subjugate Spirit and these material gains would be truly beneficial to mankind, if the spiritual side is developed along with the material with equal pace and vigour because, only then, it will be possible to maintain human being's cherished higher aims in evolution.

The professors of modernity have repeatedly promised the millennium to man for quite a long time, time enough to produce something concrete in the shape of that much coveted commodity, namely, man's mental peace and happiness which

occupy the place above all else in Creation; and what have they succeeded in accomplishing? They have fully succeeded in disturbing and even overthrowing the prized and comforting majesty of mental peace. They have attacked Religions from all angles and directions, callously disturbing the human society in a futile attempt to try and rebuild upon the ashes of fond traditions, a new utopia of which few men dare to dream only but which none have had the power to establish.

It is considered by many thinking men that the few enthusiastic dreamers will also awake to realities and face hard and unpalatable facts. They will then try to overcome these glaring drawbacks with satisfactory solutions of this unfortunate state of affairs that we have all reached. One thing I feel certain about and that is that the answer to this complicated puzzle is only one and it is the re-establishment of the Religious Spirituality as the only Saviour of the unhappy mankind.

We can no longer afford to continue to live in this futile chase of 'Will-o'-the-wisp', if greater calamities are to be avoided. Great deal of good time has already been wasted. The peace-loving Soul of man has suffered enough in this wild goose-chase of the promised millennium through material means only. As could be expected, they have, of course, remained unfulfilled up to now and will remain so in the future, if material aid alone is to be relied on. The dogged pursuit of material advance and civilisation has certainly robbed us of the most prized possessions of humanity and mankind of mental peace and of the fair and square dealings between man and man.

In the absence of religious laws, man-made laws that govern and direct our activities are comparatively shallow and crooked, primarily meant to deal with the outer surfaces only, the skin of man and the material side, and they, therefore, ignore the master of the body, the Spirit and Soul, which was always catered for by Reli-

gious Spirituality in the happier bygone days, which today remain with us only as beautiful pictures of happy memory.

What our forefathers enjoyed in society only in the recent past, we cannot hope to repeat under the present civilisation. By the absence of this one excelsior of mental peace in man's short span of life, even the physical side and longevity has suffered. Average ages have dropped. Ailments of the body have multiplied. No one dare go about without aspirins etc., and, even then, the medicine-aided body cannot hope to pass its days with that light and happy conscience that was so marked in the lives of our forefathers who lived in comparatively care-free and definitely happier times. This fact confirms the age-long Indian saying of great wisdom that 'Man may happily starve but the absence of mental peace will make him truly miserable and if this material civilisation, bereft of Religious Spirituality, has conspicuously helped man in anything, it has certainly multiplied mental miseries.'

A striking sad picture is daily witnessed by us and that is that a great number of youths, who are really anything but boys and girls, show definite signs of agedness, grey hair and all. This is, of course, owing to the unnatural and fast lives they have learnt to lead under the tutoring guidance of unholy modernity. All said and done, the machine-age, as it is more popularly known today, has really nothing to offer of real value for the Soul, no final aims for the monarch of the body, His undying spark in man.

This is how the East reads it and the East will always remain the East, so designed by the Creator with peculiarities of its own. Peculiarities of truly Eastern temperament will not alter from the inspiring centre of the being because they are so put in the foundation of the Soul by the handiwork of the Greatest Designer of the Universe. Therefore, the Eastern and Indian Sanātan Religion can never be conceived as something apart from experiences of daily life in existence. Experiences, however commonplace,

have their religious aspects. Life and Religion can, at no time, be separated off into water-tight compartments, the one to be opened only on special occasions. To the Hindu, the entire Creation is a poetic expression of His laws, where phenomenally fine adjustments of His great Māyā through mother Nature adjustingly carry out the three important phases in the universe, of Creation, Preservation and Destruction in thought, word and deed as well as the innumerable units, and even lifeless objects, apart from the daily more conspicuously glaring miracles of commonplace births, growths and deaths. Each breath of a living organism performs a hidden miracle when quite unconsciously, by sheer habit, clean air is taken in and expelled in breathing, because each volume of air is an exquisite mixture of oxygen and nitrogen gases, the essentials to life. The inhaling of this divine nectar into the lungs' area produces new tissues. With the same breath, some tissues that are designed to continue in the living organism are preserved and refreshed

and, with the exhaling of it, used-up burnt tissues are expelled, cooled by the nitrogen, in the form of carbon dioxide which is then taken up as an essential food for plant life. So the eternal Sanātan faith sees and feels the trinity of Bramhā-Vishnu-Mahesha (the three principal ministerial faculties of the Great Father, personified in Bramhā the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Mahesha the destroyer) functioning in perpetual motion in accordance with His design and wishes for all Creation. Although breathing is imperceptibly natural, yet the Great Teachers of Sanātan faith, like all else, have made super-human study of the most commonplace habit of breathing into one of the greatest achievements of mankind, the beneficially fascinating exercises of the Hindu 'Yoga'. This expression of 'Yoga' is a very wide chapter of great research and achievement. Under its head, come the "Rāj Yoga, Laya Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Gyāna Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga". This list covers the field of physical as well as the spiritual sides

of the being. The achievement and power of a high stage Yogi is definitely beyond all intelligent grasp of rational material science of today. This great Hindu masterpiece discovery has deeply excited the imaginations even of the modern materialists beyond the boundaries of India. It is the Yogi alone, who can defy the law of gravity and even physical death, deadly poisons etc. These physical achievements, though unbelievably true, pale into insignificance when spiritual miracles are compared. The subject, in fact, is so vast, delicate and complicated that it is futile to attempt a detailed discussion to bring it within the grasp of the modern reader. Those, that may be interested in it, will have to find a good Yogi and spend years and years in company with him to study and understand this priceless Eastern mystery. I will say no more about the Hindu 'Yoga' in these pages, because the subject is so vast that a whole big volume would be necessary to justly cope with it, and will merely end up by saying that a science which can truly control and

direct life is an achievement unparalleled in man's long history.

We can ignore the psychological inheritances of peoples but can never eradicate them. We can attempt to disturb them without any lasting benefit to us, in any way. India is the real cradle of that old and tried civilisation which stands second to none. She definitely excels all other parts of the globe in her achieved spiritual treasures, a fact which is so highly prized by the Eastern people and creates feelings of pride and affection for all that the great ancestors, of holy memory, have so strikingly produced and bequeathed to us, their heirs and children of the twentieth century, with great mental labours.

Peoples, like individuals, have distinctive temperaments and the most powerful race-peculiarities are to be found in their thought-structures, the social structure of the people. It is after all the structural formations that focus their conception of the world at large and approach

all external problems of life from different stand-points, undeniably resulting in differences in their literatures, arts, philosophies and Religions, and these facts are always going to remain the essentials of distinct race consciousnesses.

If one studies carefully, it is these unerasable factors that different civilisations have existed by. Owing to the imbibed ancestral heritage and culture, every people have a peculiar world idea of their own and can satisfactorily develop under the natural cultural influences of their physical and, more so, mental environments. It is only from such institutions that men, who come out, can have the balanced and correct acumen of the realisation of the world in clear relation to themselves and their country. The basic and fundamental conception of the Hindu, of Spirit first and Spirit last, the all-pervading Spirit and, therefore, the wide-spread belief in the sanctity of life, pervades through large populations, in this country. His pervading Spirit is enough to sanctify life on Earth. He Himself is unborn

though present, imperishably everlasting and the original spark of His Spirit pervades and is shared by all life. So also, the Soul and life on Earth, is also everlasting and imperishable and is, in fact, a definite particle of the Spirit of the Great Father. All else may be destroyed but It cannot be. It is true in spite of the above mentioned fact and it is distortingly covered by His great Māyā with the shackles of Karma and Samskāra in the recurring process of transitory transmigrations. It is this prehistoric fact, everlasting and eternal, in the life-story of the old Sanātan India; and the corner-stone of all Hindu thought today, as in the past, must, therefore, remain this supreme self-consciousness of so close a relation of the Creator and His Creation for all times to come.

No fear is entertained of the destruction of the Self, Spirit, with the destruction of the material body, for if the Self, Spirit, could be destroyed, He will be destroyed also, which cannot be. This logical answer keeps alive the basic Hindu

thought from which such elaborate patterns are faithfully and faultlessly worked out for all avenues of spiritual advance, in the Sañātan beliefs. The ancient Scriptures are strewn with priceless treasures for all conceivable walks of life but, to-day, they are sealed books in the curriculum of modern education, an education which has not shown results expected and promised by the designers, simply because it is unrelated to the inner Self and its thoughts and aspirations in the human species.

Man's Spirit will never be successfully measured by the material tapes. As a glaring instance of incomplete and inefficient Indian education, the philosophical degree-holders from the various Universities in India are totally ignorant of the six world-renowned highest philosophies of Sañātan culture or of the Great Bādrāyan, the composer of the Vedānta Sutra or the giants amongst the commentators, like Shankar and Rāmānuja.

Is it to be wondered, then, that in so many

sons of the soil, intellectual anarchy has played a stormy havoc and has swept before it a number of young men, like helpless crafts which have snapped their moorings? The ancient treasure of learning of so well-tried wisdoms is despised by the modern educated youth, not by choice but by sad ignorance. Sensible customs and traditions are thrust aside to make room for aimless modernity. The very life-blood of humanity, Religion, is shunned as an outworn superstition and this priceless structure of Hindu Sanātan society, as well as the precious cultures of the Great Islam, are generally undermined. This same modern material civilisation has blossomed to a peak point in the Land of the Little Father and the great Tolstoy, where the holy Gospel has been frozen for the true uplift of the human species as seen through the eyes of the machine-age. In accomplishing this great deed, they laboriously hurled down and uprooted the blue blood aristocracy whose origin was lost in the dim distant vista of bygone centuries, so full of

pride. I can only hope and pray that this great blessing will not travel to other countries in Europe and visit the warmer regions of the East and will be finally frozen in the great plains of Siberia and, by so doing, be a real saviour to mankind, because such Godless background can only produce unspiritual human shaped creatures, callous and Soulless, so full of hollow vanity, armed only with lifeless materialism. Vanity, we all know, is an unintelligible passion of a low type, one of those evils like involuntary diseases, hunger, locusts, wars etc., with which Providence is wont to punish humanity. The source of it is to be found in callous unspirituality in a mild form and frightening Godless atheism in a virulent form. It rapidly develops like a moral sickness which, like leprosy, destroys no definite part but renders monstrous the whole. When it has gradually and imperceptibly crept in the whole, there is not a thought or function it does not poison like a fell disease and, when driven out of one part, it reappears with added force in another.

In short, the irreligious vain man knows neither joy nor grief, love nor fear, hatred nor despair, everything in him is unnatural and forced, otherwise completely dead in all the conceivable finer and higher side of man.

In the absence of the spiritual foods to the beings, added miseries of life are daily piling up. Of this, I am convinced that modernity can never find anything of super, or even equal, value to underpin the edifice of the so-called modern advance and lifeless material civilisation in the times to come. Such callously reckless neglect of Religion and indispensable Spirituality to mankind is bound to eat its way into the very Soul of human species with all the virulence of corroding acids, to the extreme loss of mankind. Though the percentage is still small in the huge populations of India, yet I attach importance to it today, as it constitutes the modern youths who are going to be the coming generation.

Do not, therefore, try and fashion the history of India on lines of places far beyond her

boundaries, foreign and unsuited to the Eastern temperaments on so many fundamentals that will ultimately refuse to be eradicated or die, because India will and can never become the other place but only a distorted India, ugly in all aspects and experiences to follow.

According to the deeply ingrained Eastern faith, any teachings, however theoretically complete, must bear the mark of grave educational defects, if they are divorced from Religious Spirituality. All the Religions of the world, through the teachings of which man has attained the dignified position of a human being, have jointly pointed at this unerasable fact and this is also the outspoken eternal Sanātan belief. It is, therefore, clear that material civilisation and education, by itself, can, at no time, be termed as a friend of mankind.

The time-honoured belief and faith, all the old and tried culture, particularly of the East, that the Spirit is the beginning and the end of the world, will alone outlive all other doctrines

of materialism and whatever cultural programmes are prepared to accept this unbendable truth in Creation and accordingly fashion all mental tuition of man, it will assuredly outlive all other baseless doctrines of modernity and also the post-modern times of lifeless materialisms. Whatever peoples and countries wholeheartedly work, future human evolution, along this fundamentally correct foundational background, will eventually win in the end and that victory will indeed be a victory of mankind over savagery of all descriptions.

Theistic honesty, truthful moralities will triumph over all baser habits and unclean thoughts, that are so readily collected today under the veneer of the times we are passing through. The modernist may try the uplift of the lot of men with all his material ingenuity and strength, but he will assuredly fail, as he has hopelessly failed up till now. The Hindu belief and the Eastern temperaments never lost sight of this great truth in his vast travels through time

and has, therefore, evolved the entire thought-structure round this one central ideal. This is also the chief reason why, with so many changes in the world and with such unthinkable ages of the past, Sanātan faith and its considered axioms have not altered, just because, on all fundamentals, there can never be a compromise. Truths, with a sprinkling of alterable untruths, will destroy everything.

I have consciously emphasized the importance of fundamentals in this serious subject of Spirituality, because the modern thought, today, is so used to compromise and alter every theory the night over, calling it as a reformed outlook, which merely means that we work for today on a set programme and leave tomorrow to the circumstances.

Here, then, is a concrete valuation of a cultural faith and belief. Believe me, no faith and beliefs can consistently baffle time and live virulently for any long periods in the domain of so intellectual a creature as man, if they were not supported by unshakable truths. Any student

of human history, who can lay aside all shallow dogmatic bigotry of his pre-conceived pet theories and can focus his unbiassed mental energy of honest thought to this glaring fact of unchanging longevity with its apparent results, will be compelled to see eye to eye with the Sanātan Hindu fundamentals, because they advocate unshakable truths and truths do not belong to one faith, blindly sectarian for one section of men only, but they are definitely of a cosmopolitan nature, useful to all, friends of all.

In fact, truths are eternal. Truths have baffled time and, today as in the past, stand by mankind as the truest friends for man's betterment in every way, provided he is ready to consult them and get aided by them. Modern times, with their entire material outlook on life, have definitely influenced the Eastern life and, instead of the old axiom of 'plain living and high thinking', it has been replaced, today, by much shallower thoughts and aims.

Materialism, today, is making a desperate bid

to capture the entire field of human existence with the fullest aid of all its many lifeless machines. The important side of Spirit is, therefore, denied all aid to develop or be assisted by this so-called modern advance and civilisation even in a remote way. Men are systematically tutored to measure mankind with the tapes of machines and money only. The pure Soul, the monarch of the being, is, in so many modern eyes, of no market-value at all, a tiresome fact of its very existence. To a modernist, it is almost a nightmare which, he thinks, should somehow be securely imprisoned for life in the great prison-house of materialism or even be destroyed to safely ensure material progress of the human species.

This, in a nutshell, is the final aim of modernity. Wants and more material wants to daily clothe with changing fashion the ugly features of the animal existence of modern man, are industrially provided in the programmes of today. Nothing, but time and failures, will alter the modern aims to more truthful and sensible conclusions.

CHAPTER XIV

MOTHERS—COW AND THE GANGES

A word about Mothers—Cow and the Ganges—will help the scoffing ignorants to appreciate the causes of deep veneration for these two by the entire Hindu community. To quote Religious Scriptures would be to court failure in my object of conveying the more rationally rational reasons to those who are likely to pay less attention to the sacred voice of Religion. I will, therefore, attempt to explain the general aspects of the two as they affect society in the Eastern life and temperaments.

MOTHER Cow

The cow, although a creature with its own life like the rest of us, is the greatest friend and helper of mankind, from all points of view.

Indeed, the material economic conditions of the peoples of India would become unrecognisable, if the cow was suddenly taken out of our lives. A long and important list can be drawn up of the great selfless sacrifices she renders with her children and her body to this great Eastern granary. The vast resources of Mother India and of her greatest industry of agriculture would be truly paralysed without her immense aid.

The plough, the drawing of water for irrigation purposes from wells, from streams and tanks, the carts to carry grain to the markets, the travelling of families from one village to another, hundred and one other uses of the bullock cart, the valuable manures she produces, the hides, bones etc., would, all, be brought to nought with a staggering blow to the economic life of the people of the country. In fact, if the uses were to be enumerated in detail of her products and by-products, the list would startle even the most materially minded and, then, the value of the cow would go up.

This is merely the material side minus the much greater and deeper religious value, and if the two lists could be added together and feelingly understood, the cow protection would be whole-heartedly accepted and her indispensable needful presence and use could not be replaced by all the material sciences of today.

In India and also in other parts of the world, her dairy products alone would justify her indispensable need. In India, particularly, which is comparatively a meatless country, as a whole, the dairy products most profitably and successfully replace the need of meat and, thus, those products virtually become the backbone of human life. Her fresh milk and by-products, for such a huge population of four hundred millions, cannot be replaced for choice by anything else.

The milk to the new-born, the aged, the sick and the dying, her rich creams, essential butters, curds of India-wide use in so many ways etc., are truly those essentials to human life in this country, without which the entire life of the

infant and the old would be totally stranded on a death-desert in the life-struggles of the peoples of this country.

Even a dearth of these essentials in the tropical Eastern life very adversely affects healths of the entire peoples of our beloved Motherland in every conceivable way. Men's vitalities are alarmingly lowered in places, where there is a shortage of the essentials of milk etc., and, then, they present such easy prey in that lowered stamina to the devastating tropical diseases that, so often, habitually appear in epidemic forms, claiming millions of precious human lives.

Dairy products are, in short, the real nectar in the East of the tropical rays. They are the irrevocable feeders of life in the human species here and they, as we all know, truly form the very foundation of mankind in the lives of children onwards. The preliminary stage of man of his childhood, we know, has no other satisfactory alternative in the body-building age,

except Mother Cow's milk which contains all the most correctly balanced scientific ingredients as essentials to all parts of the body in its growth, masterly proportioned, and this should be so, as the milk-dish is prepared, in the divine kitchen of the Mother Cow, by Him.

Even in the growing progressive stages in after-life, they form the essentials in our Indian menus in many ways and these are accepted in India and the East as the most health-giving dietary for longevity's sake, because we have intelligently discovered that the overuse of heating meat-diet is prohibitive on account of the salient reasons given above and is very sparingly used only with strong spices, as an antidote to it, for the sake of good health and particularly to expand the life-span in tropical climates.

Apart from this, her bones, skin, horns and hoofs and all the other by-products from these, so enormously contribute to balance the economic conditions of the Eastern people. Even the urine and the cow-dung, apart from valuable manures,

are of the greatest medicinal value to peoples in India and this knowledge of it is intelligently known to the masses in the country. Incidentally, it is also within the economic reach of the poorest.

Mother Nature is still mysterious to be fully understood by man because, unlike millions of other animals, the cow-urine and dung are endowed with enormous medicinal disinfectant qualities. The cow-dung, for instance, naturally contains large enough quantities to be a most convenient germicide of carbolic acids, a valuable commodity known to the medical world for the destruction of all disease germs, the enemy of mankind. It also provides convenient fuel for the poor men in rural areas as well as the towns.

The cow and all she gives to mankind are of such unique value that no animal or other agency can replace it to the teeming millions in India. Apart from material value, the Eastern temperament has the most emotional, sentimental and religious feelings towards Mother Cow. As

I have expressed the spiritual outlook on the Eastern life all along and in India particularly, the cow, with her infinite selfless aid to man, very strongly enters the spiritual arena of the Hindus in particular and, even, the Mohammedans of this country, I have known by personal experience, entertain extremely tender feelings towards their cow and cattle.

Her relations to man, as compared to all other animals, are peculiarly her own, because she alone, of all the animals and even men, except for the few isolated cases of wet nurses, shares the great responsibility of satisfactorily keeping the body and Soul together of the Indian babies. She virtually takes charge of the baby for its essential nourishments from its own mother and feeds it with her own life-blood of milk, like the natural mother. In doing so, there is abysmal difference in the duration of this important duty of hers. While the natural mother can only support her offspring during the usual time of lactation, Mother Cow carries on providing the

most nourishing dietary till the very end of human existence.

Even, when a man is actually on his death-bed, experienced physicians prescribe, in that delicate state, only minute quantities of milk as the only food which could be safely assimilated by the sick patients. No other foods or solids are sanctionable by good medical opinion.

All said and done, we are human beings with a beating heart inside us. Strong currents of emotion and sentiments, the inborn peculiarity of the East and India, become irresistible, when we focus our eyes on to Mother Cow's selfless services to mankind and this, then, irresistibly dictates to the human conscience that it would be unholy, outrageously unnatural, to eat such a mother's flesh. Since the cow maintains the longest period of motherly duties to mankind and, therefore, is like your own mother, she should not be slaughtered and eaten but fully protected and reverenced and this, then, is the uppermost thought of the Hindu population.

By doing so, like all human units do, we only pay a just debt of gratitude to the motherly kindness she is constantly bestowing on us. Religion, like nothing else, gives one spiritual awakening in all phases of life and, if one can only devote certain time to get the real picture assigned to the Mother Cow in it, I am certain one would, then, become a rabid cow protectionist.

Throughout the endless transmigrations of human Soul, it is the cow in the spiritual world of the Hindus which helps you to reach the harbours of safety and peace and the Soul of man, through Spirituality, aspires to safe destinations by the help of Mother Cow. So the Scriptures say and these remarks of mine can always be confirmed by consulting them.

MOTHER GANGES

After saying these few words about Mother Cow, I shall say something about Mother Ganges.

Artistic Nature has been the master of

beautiful things and sceneries. All rivers give their final touch which enhances the picturesque human imagery to perfection in earthly scenes. The mountains, forests, rivers, all greatly contribute to Nature's artistry and, in India, the beauties of the natural sceneries, as in other parts of the world, have always been admired from times immemorial.

In India and the East, natural sceneries are not only valued for their picturesqueness but they have helped to sharpen the appreciation of spiritual side in man, so exclusively used for religious uplift.

Natural beauties in India of the countryside have always presented themselves to mankind as a real friend. The fruits, flowers, grazing lands for Mother Cow, valuable tropical timbers, medicinal herbs, all contribute to the beauties in landscape. In the tropics, nothing is so prized by life as water. Hence the name of 'Nārāyana' to the Almighty, 'One who resides in and is surrounded by water'.

Apart from the great artistic beauty, water adds so much to Mother Earth's scenes. The value of it in tropical rays is truly phenomenal. Naturally, therefore, all perennial rivers are very highly prized for all reasons. The waters in them in India are generally fresh and clear except in the monsoons but, even, during that period, there is no suggestion of any stagnation or unhygienic rots. They rear, with the valuable flow of their waters, precious crops. The silts, left behind after the yearly rains, give us highly natural manured lands for food crops. They help fruit trees. They keep up the important subsoil water level in our wells. The growth of foliage and green grass along the water courses is always abnormally good etc.

Although the flowing waters do all these benefactions to mankind in so many rivers in India as elsewhere, it is the super quality of the Ganges water in her uninterrupted flow which puts its material value above all other streams and rivers known to us.

Amongst the Hindus, it is religiously customary to keep the holy Ganges water bottled in all our houses for countless religious purposes. This practice of the use and keeping of the Ganges water is not of a recent origin but very old. Stagnant waters, as a rule, decompose but not so the Ganges water and, therefore, it can be kept for unlimited periods in all its freshness.

This unique quality of the extreme purity of the Ganges water excited modern scientific imagination and has compelled the laboratories to analyse the Ganges water in an attempt to discover the mysteries of its phenomenal qualities of self-preservation. The experimental research has disclosed amazing facts through this method and they are that the water of the Mother Ganges, in its travels through the mightiest mountains in the world and the most beautiful, the great *Himālayas*, mysteriously assimilates quantities of oxidised gold and mercury in extremely good proportions in thoroughly edible doses for human consumption and life. It carries with it few

other minor ingredients also of a beneficial nature.

The presence of such strong germicides, as mercury and gold, possibly through the agency of some volcanic action in the subterranean streams, explains the highly preservative qualities of the waters of the Mother Ganges.

The well-known, highly valued, Āyurvedic system of medicines of the land, is never tired of praising the beneficial effects on health of the Mother Ganges' waters. It is also boldly claimed by some that many fell diseases, including the dreaded leprosy, can be arrested and, even, cured by the continual use of the sacred waters.

As a river, she is as beautiful and attractive as the most beautiful rivers of the world. When she leaves her paternal home of eternal snows, she travels through the mightiest range of mountains in the world, the famous Himālayas, and descends into the beloved plains of India at Hardwār (the gates of the Gods). From there, she takes a natural river course through India

and flows into the Bay of Bengal. Throughout her long journey, she provides all the amenities that good, plentiful and healthy water does, the true value of which can never be appreciated so deeply by any non-inhabitant of this country as by the peoples of tropical India. She truly mothers all life, adjacently situated along her long and beautiful course, in so many ways.

The sentimental value of such a friend is hundredfold enhanced, when we take count of the religious obligations in the vast Hindu populations. The last remains of man should, as far as possible, reach the waters of the Mother Ganges is the inherent wish of all Hindu Souls. They wish to do so because they have unshakable faith that the earthly sins, committed by the material body, will be washed off the Soul that once occupied an earthly body. The strong attachment of sentiments reaches its zenith when we scrutinize the full life-story of the Hindu. He is, of course, born like any other man on Earth, grows and dies in the usual ways, but what

happens when the last phase comes to pass? All the earthly associations of the material world, the ostentatiously noisy and boisterous affections by relatives, friends, etc., cease from that loved body when the Soul has left it and the one uppermost thought in the minds of all, at that time, is to take away the bodily remains from the house with haste.

All relations, with the other beings of that much talked of body in a live state, wish to send it away from their presence. When that sad stage is reached and the once so well loved body is disowned by all, Mother Ganges opens her pure breast to receive it without any compunctions as all good mothers should. She receives the rich and the poor alike. Her solicitude to all her children in India is the same. She washes off the sins of mankind with a single motherly brush of purity and recommends to the Creator a better existence to her faithful children in the next transmigration.

Such is the blind faith of the Hindus in her

potency and influencing capacities for the departed being's Soul with the great Father. The Hindus, therefore, can only look upon Mother Ganges as the real mother, who bestows her great material and spiritual qualities at a stage when all earthly mothers have discarded them.

It is no wonder that, after such a picturesque sentimental faith, the entire Hindu population looks upon Mother Ganges as a real, revered and loved mother.

These are the few observations about Mother Ganges as they affect the vast populations of this country. If the great spiritual conception through Religions is consulted, the value to the Soul reaches unbelievable bounds and those that wish to know will know from the Scriptures and good teachers.

CHAPTER XV

CASTE SYSTEM

IN the vast cultural structure of the Hindu society, there is yet another item which wants elucidation to explain the object of a very important decision, taken by the authors of the entire Hindu cultural thought, so long ago, followed and believed into the present day with happy results. I am referring to the glaring objections, so many times so unjustly levelled against the Hindu society in her great caste system. An explanatory and comprehensive answer seems necessary to this just, though misunderstood, practice. Like all good doctrines, the perverted practices of such a doctrine, with any excuses over enthusiasms or any considerations, will always be condemned, not only because they are unjust but because they would be unwise and wrong.

It is a sad fact that in places it has gone far

beyond its legitimate lines the authors ever dreamt of, with natural unhealthy consequences and such mistakes are always unanswerable that have been definitely injurious to us all.

What is caste system? Why was it at all introduced and followed for so long? Has it been a logical scheme? These are the questions which all outsiders find puzzling and an answer is therefore, needed.

The first foundations of the belief are that Souls are sent down and taken away *alone* by the Almighty. His selection and choice into environments of families is designed by Him with justice for greater happiness and good of mankind with the backbone of the list of Karmas, the unescapable background of accumulated actions of the Soul that produce in men, like a photograph, the varied temperaments in inborn habits and choices and the number of years in each span of a life in the transmigration journey of the Soul on the limitless road of time.

The caste system is divided under four heads

only: the Brāhmans, the Kshattriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The belief is that each is given his or her birth in a particular family according to the Karmas in the past lives. Incidentally, it correctly fills the pattern in His great design of Creation.

What prompted the designing ancestors to think of these four divisions only and not three or five? The origin of this, for practical purposes in societies and countries, arose by fundamental needs in Creation to satisfactorily balance and correctly allot division of labour in the best method to the real profit of mankind.

The designers had to make the deepest study of the practical side of existence of His sanctioned and approved natures to get inspirations from. After long and strenuous study, they copied into society the most Perfect Creature of the Great Father of a 'Man after His own image'. Like all else, the great Maharsis were not ignorant of the delicate and the most fascinating anatomy of human body—the priceless Āyurveda is a living

example of the super researches in the domain of that science, in which the master mechanisms of the body and medicine have been so elaborately discussed and explained.

Since the human body was made the subject of this minute study, the conclusions arrived at were that in the created world the super-design of a man's body is divided distinctly into four divisions accepted as main functional apartments, most exquisitely balanced and useful to the created being. The 'Head' for the important mental work; the 'Arm and Shoulder' for the importance of protection and service of the whole body from head, at one end, to the feet, at the other; the 'Abdominal region' as a soft peace-loving trade centre, from where all vital supplies to life are distributed; and 'Pair of legs and feet' that are designed to discharge the important duty of mobile labour to man.

It is worthy of note that each one of these is of vital importance to the other three and, therefore, to the whole. Any man, with a clear

head, strong arms, good digestion and a strong pair of legs, is accepted as a healthy human unit, fully qualified to look after himself and be of real service to the rest of His Creation.

With this dominating ideal of such a perfect living example in Creation, it was extended in practice to peoples and countries, fully backed by most logical and practical reasoning.

Any country, with sage and far-sighted counsellors, a strong army, flourishing trades, organised and disciplined labour, must be accepted as a most useful bit of Earth in real service of Creation, as a whole. Any unbalancing abnormalities in divisions in under- or over-growths in any of the four heads described above must necessarily breed ailments in individuals and painful disorders in societies, simply because they become unnaturally balanced. Costly experiments have been made and can be made in an attempt to master over Nature's unbending habit of inequality by all known methods and degrees of Socialism and, even, Bolshevisms. A

great deal of paper and breath has been liberally spent with the unnatural slogans of equality, liberty, fraternity etc., but Nature obstinately refuses co-operation with the mass production of socialist ideals and a bitter fact has to be swallowed that the true habit of Nature cannot be modified or upset by mechanical cries of socialists and their callous outlook on Creation.

When Bolshevism appeared for the first time, none paid attention to it, as no one even faintly believed that a small grey cloud in the holy land of the great Czars, which appeared on the horizon line, would ever grow to such unexpected proportions that would for ever obscure the sunshine of greatness in the realms of the Czars of all the Russias. *This irresponsible tree grew from the seed of Socialism*, and similarly, sometime before in France, socialist tendencies gave birth to an ideal for the change for the better. The French, then, freely began to kill one another like they did in Russia in mass murders and these heinous crimes were, then,

attempted to be explained away, by the unprincipled Godless irreligious perpetrators, as noble acts of intellectual crickets, highly lettered, only for the real welfare of these two countries where they meant to establish the most opposed doctrine in God's nature of liberty, equality and fraternity in the designed diversified world in His Creation. After these unholy blood baths, Russia set herself on a programme to bring about a world revolution for the greatest good of mankind and France, then, attacked her neighbour, the new reason given, then, by her was that Europe had to be resisted and that her welfare demanded offensive wars, though these explanations had nothing to do with facts themselves. Men went on killing their fellow-men, hypnotised by slogans like 'the glory of France' etc. Thus, with irresponsible Godless leaders to guide, they engaged masses of men in these bloody battles. When they did so, they were not supposed to be morally responsible and other countries and peoples had to suffer without a murmur.

Countless experiments in the past have not altered the set-laws of Nature and they hold good, today, that inborn temperamental habits are impressionably carried to the progeny from the ancestry in all creatures of the Earth.

A horse-dealer would talk for hours on the breeding of good horses for various purposes. Dogs present a most interesting illustration of hard facts, why a coursing greyhound will not satisfactorily carry out retriever's duties etc. Cows, in the dairies the world over, are scientifically and systematically experimented upon with signal successes through correct breeding. In fact, all life has to carry bold imprint of forefathers with strong ancestral leaning.

The span of human life is not too long and, keeping in view this sad though important fact, the characteristic foresight born of vast experiences in evolutionary process, the authors of the Hindu cultures profitably used the dictates of Nature to the greatest good of mankind.

Unlike the modern times, they did not have

much faith in ambiguous slogans promising millenniums, meaningless phrases and, in the end, they, in the old days, never attempted to build false hopes in peoples' minds through any agency of oily-tongued visionary politicians. They were honestly practical people, ever willing to co-operate with God's nature, as He designed it, to the best advantage of His Creation in which the most important creature on Earth, man, had his largest share of the joys of life on lasting foundations of the vast spiritual field of Eastern Spirituality as distinct from animal life.

Such people-wide programme rightly catered for the correct temperaments of this old country to truly satisfy comfortingly the sentimental and emotional hearts of the Eastern people. They, therefore, openly divided society into four parts only for the real progress and advance of nations and countries and taught us in practice that, with the *least waste of good time in the limited span of man's life*, the inborn ancestral strain of each

being will invariably help natural leanings of the individual. This, then, would naturally mean that an honest attempt on the right lines to improve the four branches of society was wisely made, which are so essential to the whole and the success of such logically wise programme would be, more or less, guaranteed with infinitely less chances of misfits, failures and revokes with the important consideration, never lost sight of, of the short span of human life, thus safeguarding the unnecessary waste of valuable time in the trials and experiments.

The hoary Hindu history, with its priceless cultures, its great Religions, highest philosophies, with the real champion of Spirituality, stands up to this day as a witness to a very long and illustrious list of giant intellects, brave warriors, sound economic traders and devoted tireless workers. When all this is summed up as a product of the caste system, one cannot help feeling that this is no mean achievement. Modern material machine-age has altered many things and outlooks in the

aims of life and, in spite of material gains, it is still in an experimental stage, groping in uncertain lights to discover the lasting axioms for the real happiness of the Spirit of man. Successes in any world of horses etc., are very different from intelligent human evolution, where intelligent human conscience, with the powerful influences of Samskāras, the photograph of unescapable Karmas, guides the activities of mankind and not merely animal instincts.

Various machines and means of quick travels have not helped the peace of mind of mankind which is the final aim of all life on Earth. Of this, I am certain that no country or population, anywhere, can ever hope to be logically balanced with consistent happy results in human society, if it is not divided correctly into four essential divisions at the service of the whole, namely, thoroughly honest and far-sighted counsellors, brave and loyal soldiers, shrewd economists and traders, hard working and willing labour. Such proportioned societies have done wonders in the

past and will, always, be capable of turning real deserts into smiling habitations for mankind for the greatest good of human society.

All parts of the Earth with different nations and peoples, without openly declaring these four essential divisions in society, all the same, use them for their countries' and peoples' good. But, in India amongst the Hindus, this has not only been used in an unbalanced and fluctuating happy-go-lucky way but bravely and openly declared and accepted for the real service of the country and its peoples, guided by deep theistic faith that He alone chooses each Soul to appear in individual families with justice to the individual and the greatest good of society.

In whatever parts of the Earth, these four sections with assigned duties attend whole-heartedly to their respective duties assigned to them in truest service of the whole, peace and plenty invariably bless those countries.

Disorders and unhappinesses visit those lands only, where the divisions of labour have not

been defined or where, having been once defined, the correct balance has been upset by allowing abnormal growth of one section disproportionately over the other three and *vice versa*. Any such incorrect proportion naturally unbalances society at the cost of peoples' peace and happiness. Wrong caste in a wrong place is more liable to misfits than the correct ones, because the individual man naturally inherits the unavoidable ancestral temperaments that vary with great contrast, one from the other, and this fact alone contributes for a satisfactory working or otherwise. For instance, the best-bred retriever can never successfully compete with a coursing greyhound and *vice versa*. A good plough or a cart horse could never be a successful Derby runner or, even, a polo pony.

The same advantages and disadvantages of proper breeding amongst the dairies of the world are noticed. In fact, all birds and beasts must respond naturally to the force of ancestral strain and, why not men, who are after all just as much

creatures of Creation as the rest? This is a living fact today, as it was thousands of years ago, and the authors of the caste system intelligently understood the unbending habit of the force of Nature.

They, therefore, saw and acknowledged the potency of His laws in Creation and, then, they logically diverted those forces into the channels of the caste to different mankind. I know, modern society will try to obstinately refuse the correctness of the caste formula for man's real progressive happiness and, therefore, nothing but Father Time and constant failures will convince mankind that the caste system in India has, at no time, been a myth or a wilful selfish thinking by a selected few.

It is supported by very strong edicts of Nature itself and, therefore, it will be found most difficult to set aside those living facts which Nature would repeat times out of number and would finally defeat all attempts to make room for the modern theories of Socialism etc. They only

treat the outer skin of man and erringly ignore the Spirit inside.

Having said in defence of the caste system with logical arguments and living facts in Creation that are difficult to override for choice even by critical critics, it is only just to make a clean Breast of the unholy misuse that has been made of it for several centuries without even a suggestive trace of sanctions of the authors of the great Sanātan cultural Religion which the caste system, primarily, springs from. Throughout the Scriptures and Codes of religious law, there is no room for doubt that only four castes have been sanctioned but what do we find, today, in practice in India, is not five but five hundred and more divisions.

These artificial divisions are perpetrated, through ignorance or selfish motives, by a section of peoples who profess extreme sensitiveness over their self-made imaginary caste lines, wholly divorced from the remotest intentions of the authors of the great Religion and their wishes.

In fact, these caste lines are those which are untraceable anywhere in the wide field of pure Sanātan tenets and, therefore, a totally mythical aftergrowth bred in an age of decay and fanaticism.

Irreligious superstition undoubtedly gave birth to this sad idiosyncrasy and has proved in practice one of the bitterest foes of the entire Hindu society. This ill-conceived and unfortunate derailment from the right road of Religion has bloomed to its fullest height in certain parts of Southern India, where the mere shadow of a fellow-being with a human Soul in flesh and blood, created by the same Universal Father, is considered an unholy stain of pollution! The accepted, universally dedicated houses of God, the temples, are deliberately curtained from the eyes of a certain section of human beings to preserve the holy godly influences in the temples unpolluted but, otherwise, these same people are accepted to belong to the Hindu society for useful labour.

Such degenerate and short-sighted unsanctioned misuse of the caste system can never be supported by any religion-knowing man and those, that have sustained this ungodly and un-Sanātanīc superstition have truly stained the pure and high Hindu Religion. Let me assure those that are in doubts over this matter, that only four are designed and sanctioned for the real good to society and that the fifth caste just does not exist in religious law and this religious sanction of the holy law, all true Hindus, as a rule, must humbly submit to obey. If, for any reasons, one out of the four dwindle or is seemingly eliminated, no country or people can ever dream to prosper with only three or less, as the socialists propose to bring about.

Commonsense logic would confirm that each one of the four, for practical purposes in existence in countries, is of equal value to the whole, just as man cannot usefully thrive with the absence of one division of his body out of the four or, even, under the unnatural development of one

of the four, because it would compromise his health and working capacities. For an ideal existence, all four must occupy their natural places, normally developed with honest useful concern and solicitude of each for the other three. Any country, which braves to ignore this natural adjustment in society, will assuredly suffer and all troubles, created by wrong divisions or in the absence of one caste, will drive nations to desperation in time, just as man would be constantly incapacitated in his physical derangements.

The caste system, if properly followed, is essential to society and can permanently do infinite amount of good to mankind instead of any harm, as is generally believed by modern minds. I am defending the proper caste system only and not the perverted use of such a logical scheme. Whenever and wherever this logical finding of correct balancing of society has been missed, those peoples and countries have not only suffered in the ordinary practical side of evolution but

numerous roads for further evils in societies have been opened.

There is nothing wholly good and nothing wholly bad, so says a passage in the Vishnu Purāna. The World is composed of all sorts and, indeed, merit thrives only in contrast to demerit and *vice versa*. Correctly used caste system will always befriend man but if, unfortunately, it is used as a lever for narrower and selfish motives, it can deeply hurt society. This misuse of the caste system has brought in its train the most unnatural and irreligious rational superiority and inferiority complex with inevitable heart-burns in the sensitive human society, instead of the natural homage to honest merit.

This superiority is demanded unreasonably by men who are, by Karma and achievement, definitely inferior to many other good sons of the Great Father. By others, it is used along with a score of other baseless superstitions and this superstitious fungus is, then, used as the only set

of rules for religious merit. Religion and all its teachings have never taught anything but codes of just and logical laws. It will always be a false belief that to merely shave one's head and retain a scheming brain inside would make you a religious man.

This sort of world-wide cheating of the fellow-beings with the outer surface make-ups is in itself most irreligious, for Religion always prefers honest truths and shuns falsities. Many of those fantasies of perverted religion have led astray many good Souls and have helped no one except, perhaps, the few money-making irreligious humbugs.

So many other sham practices have been in our use, today, only to rob people of their good and honest money with the trade-mark of the dresses and paints, shaven heads etc., in the name of the Great Father and His honest God-given Religion. Such false practices have definitely shaken faith and have hurt the priceless religious beliefs, the world over. The sooner these

practices are sternly discouraged and finally abolished to be replaced by the great religious teachings in all their high ideals of purity, the better it will be for the entire human society.

In the end, let me, once again, reiterate that the four divisions are natural and essential, *but only four and no more*. If any body says there are more than that, do not believe, because one who says so, is totally un-Hindu and does not know his Religion. He is a dark enemy of your society. The Hindu society will be truly rescued from evil consequences the day these four castes only remain in it with the imaginary mushroom-growth sub-castes merged into the four.

CHAPTER XVI

THE UNITY TIME

(Of Sandhyā And Temple-Worship)

SANDHYA

ALTHOUGH changed conditions and times, with the impacts of the above mentioned modern thought, have considerably altered the life of faith in Religions and Spirituality in other places outside India, the scenes in Hindu India are more or less intact today, as a whole. For instance, the Sandhyā time or the "earmarked time of unity" still maintains its supreme importance in the minds of the Hindus. The temple bells ring uninterrupted, from one end of the country to the other, not to collect money but to remind of Him, Who is so apt to be forgotten by man, today, in the kaleidoscopic and ceaseless raging storm of His Great Māyā.

Why the Sandhyā time, so earmarked and scrupulously selected, assumes such an importance in the Hindu eyes, as compared to the rest of the twentyfour hours, is again due to the same basic cause that has influenced the entire Hindu Eastern thought, aiming at and vouchsafing the aid of the great spiritual background from all natural sources.

This, as I have said, has been the untiring attempt of this old culture to logically harness all contributing natural causes and influences, driven on by that one central ideal of the spiritual uplift. Therefore, in this selection also, the Sandhyā time has been preferentially selected and chosen as the most appropriate and helpful for man's Soul to attempt to approach Him.

The East has, all along, maintained the great ideal with faith that the spiritual side of humanity is above and superior to all other considerations on the material plane of the Earth and, therefore, the material body, although important, has always occupied a secondary place; and yet the

outward causes have never been belittled in their influencing capacities on the Soul of man by our Great Teachers, since the fact remains that, in Creation, God has so willed that the correct and the only vehicle of the pure Soul is the material body during its existence on Earth and is, therefore, indispensable through the span of human life. But far greater heed is paid to the monarch of the being, the undying Soul and its future, which is designed to outlive the life of physical bodies and continue its journey through transmigrations, influenced by the recurring Karmas through the physical body and, therefore, in spite of their never accepting, at any time, the material religion of modernity or anything approaching it, they have all along been fully conscious of the great influencing capacity of the multipatterned world, as perceived by human senses in day to day living.

In sympathy with that thought, they have profitably chosen this particular period for its influencing potency on the senses in preference

to the rest of the hours of the day and the night. The reasons are practical, logical and natural. The great background of Sanātan culture has always been in tune with Nature in a most practical way. It has used Nature's aid in all conceivable ways. It has always given due consideration to the forces that definitely exercise such a lot of influence on man and, therefore, it rightly believes that the physical ears and eyes cannot but deeply influence the Soul's mental conceptions.

To take the fullest aid from these two powerful windows of the Soul's imagery faculties in an honest attempt to aid and guarantee a more convincing hope of success in the Soul's highest aims, the whole living panorama round the being, as conceived through these powerful inlets to the inner Soul, at the earmarked Sandhyā time, is most profitably used.

And what does a man conceive with his entire surroundings? He conceives only one picture in active motion and that is that the whole Creation

presents to him an unstaged but spontaneous scene of species-wise unity. This influencing spectacle reminds him with a great force of his own responsible duties and his relative position, in Creation, to search and discover his own and real species.

The natural pressing urge surges in his Soul to follow the programme of world-wide unity with the distinctive species. The insects instinctively gather together at that time in their own species; the birds also get together, wherever they may be, on the trees, water or ground; the animals also herd themselves together instinctively, the insects and fish in all waters also get together and, as if to influentially emphasize and suggest this powerful optical impression of pervading unity on to the Soul of man, even the day and night meet.

Thus, this creation-wide optical picture all round him cannot but deeply influence the Soul of man, who is an intelligent student of Nature and a believer in his God and one who luckily

possesses a prayerful mood to attempt to find its own true mate and species. The Hindu, who has never attempted even to remotely relate himself to the material aspect of Creation and who carries with him deep-seated faith on the undying feature of his Soul, which is entirely Spirit and not Matter, is, therefore, compelled under the powerful influences of his entire surroundings at this particular hour of the day to terminate temporary isolation of the lonely Soul and convincingly argue with himself and, then, piously resolve to learn and follow the living lesson from his entire surroundings, most of which are unintelligent as compared to the human family, to also get close to and in touch with Him, his real parental source, at this suggestive chosen hour of Sandhyā.

He is conscientiously convinced that the Soul of his own species is directly related to Him to Whom he really belongs, and as he contemplates so, his Soul humbly seeks unity with his ancestral Soul of the Universe. Aided by the

influence of the entire optical surroundings at this time of the Sandhyā, if he can single-mindedly pray, so fully aided by the impressing optical picture carried into him through the powerful physical inlets, his success is more logically assured at this hour than at any other time of the day and night. It is, therefore, abundantly clear that this influentially persuasive aid, from the outward surroundings, is not forthcoming in any other period and, therefore, Sandhyā (the sunset and sunrise time when day and night meet) is logically correct and chosen for its importance to mankind.

TEMPLE-WORSHIP

Again, another predominating Hindu habit of temples and more temples, as a whole, still persists in spite of the machine-age though, under the impact of modernity, the precincts of these houses, dedicated to God, are slightly shorn of

their original pristine glory. Here too, the causes have been the same as I have previously mentioned. Either the temple-priest is sadly ignorant of the correct rituals or he has aped and parroted the rituals mechanically and is otherwise innocent of the deeper meaning of 'prayer. Whatever the contributing causes may be, the resultant effect on the temple-going population has been anything but satisfactory. Like so many other things, this wrong influence, even from the sacred temple, has further handicapped our spiritual lives, aided by adverse influences of modernity.

We are, today, all prepared to pass our chosen time for temple-service in cinema halls and social clubs. The Hindu populations are very great and, barring those comparatively few who have been denied the religious tuition from any causes, there are so many more who have not been touched or spoiled by the impact of the material age of today and, to such, the prayer in the temple is still a reality. To them, it is still

a pious pilgrimage and, to such prayer-minded, the temple, its music and incenses, excite deep religious fervours and so many regretfully recall the fascinating religious romances of some by-gone age with a hopeful thrill in their prayers, fascinating and semi-mystic, because many of these old temples in India have recorded history* where miracles have happened by the potency of faithful prayers, which are always beyond any measurements and understanding of science.

The Eastern Souls by temperament carry with them an untutored capacity to faithfully believe in the potency of miracles. This peculiarity of the East has its inspiring centre, deep in the Eastern Religions which are strewn with vivid descriptions of so many miracles by elevated Souls of proper Mahātmās and Fakirs or, even, by sincere devotees.

Thus, the temple and its precincts represent like a great trade centre of stock exchanges or a telephone exchange, as we find in the modern world of baser worshippers of Mammon like

these earthly places for the congregations of all the material minded crowds where financial magnates conspicuously tower over the lesser fry's, who gather there to get inspirations and learn the art of making money, by watching the actions of the gifted magnates or hearing other people describe the shrewd economic art of money manipulations, to enrich their experiences of learning for successful future careers.

The temples also gather round them spiritual magnates and have done so from vast ages, hallowed by adorations of generations upon generations of unceasing migrations of mankind across the toil-worn sands of time. The worshippers still see, in the temples with their intellectual visions, a chosen place on Earth of spiritual reconciliation, where the Finite may attempt to approach the Infinite with focussed faith for the greatest profit of the spiritual Soul.

The resolve of prayer is more easily born in

such surroundings, aided no doubt by living examples and traditions or, even, as the advanced scientist would say, by the effect of the accumulated electrons that have been left behind by prayerful hearts and cannot but reflect on to the sensitive Souls of the prayer-minded visitors to temples.

The material modern culture has definitely attempted, knowingly or unknowingly, to throw the proverbial wet blanket on the deep religious fervour of the peoples, the world over, partially succeeding in damping faith in God, but it has not fully succeeded in killing the fear of the Supernatural in the hearts of men and, therefore, even with the impact of modern times, the temples in India still occupy a place of great sanctity. It is always worth while to study the human activities round these holy houses dedicated to God.

The early mornings and the late evenings are the selected times for temple-pilgrimages. Usually, therefore, men gather in and around the

temple buildings for prayers and the faith, in the potency of prayers, still commands a great place in the minds and hearts of the Eastern people.

Many, owing to worldly occupations for bread and butter, cannot assemble actually at the temple and remain some distances away, busy in their daily duties, occupied with their bread-winning labours.

The music of the bells and the incense reach them to remind of the prayer time. Millions of Hindu hands go up together in reverential prayers within the temples and, also, those who are far away, with both hands together, they all pray. They pray for pardon of men's sins, the most heinous and unforgivable crime of forgetting Him Who has bestowed the body and Soul, the real Master, Father, Maker and all else, for so often forgetting Him or ignoring all His many compassionate gifts to Creation and, therefore, for all transgressions, all ill-conceived obstinacies, pride, vain glory and so many other follies in this imperfect world that dwarf man's high position,

assigned to him by the Creator, in His vast and enchanting Creation, ending up their humble prayers by saying that in this imperfect world, 'To err is only human but to forgive is Divine'.

During those worship hours, the pleasing bells are struck rhythmically and the music of human voices goes together in humble prayerful messages within the temples. The sound of this daily divine drama on Earth echoes through space to peoples who may be far away from the sacred buildings, the praying human voices with faith and humble pleading, to the accompaniment of the instrument of the temple, and the music sounds to those far off people, like a pathetic sigh of appeal as if coming from a distant cloudland, wafted on the pleasing germicidal smoke of the incense. For, indeed, it is so in fact, since the really helpless and weak material images of men are sending those messages of prayer of the Soul, through their own material bodies, to the Mighty Spirit beyond, for mercy and forgiveness.

The optical picture of the heavenly canopy synchronises with the solemnity of the occasion with the awesome beauty of its own, because the sky at the period also presents a fascinating picture of artistic taste, when the last glows of the sunset linger and seem to hesitate in delicate tones of gold, as if loath to fade into the cheerless, dreary embrace of the night.

This picturesque time of the evening gets added attractive charm with the mental background of the prayer hours, particularly in the houses dedicated to Him. What, with humble and sincere prayers, the pleasing bells and incenses, an awesome, attractive, mysterious majesty pervades the atmosphere in which the uppermost mental faith, in the all-guiding Providence, wielded by God, reigns supreme. Even, the scoffing modern habit is forgotten for the time being and men begin, once again, to learn how to believe and how to humbly pray. These attractive evening scenes are constantly repeated all over Hindu India, in and around the

temples, by peoples still in the affairs of the world, employed to maintain family lives with various occupations.

But, another spiritually developed important section of the Hindu community, the ascetic-minded, also finds very great fascination at this hour, as the artistic shades of the evening draw in along with the subtle veil of melancholy, which beauty always lends to the truly enchanting hour of Sandhyā and just the time to lure the lonely Soul of the hermit, miles away from the human habitations, deep into the jungles, that portion of unspoiled Mother Earth which the Hindu from times immemorial, has chosen to represent the real temple of Nature, not built by imperfect hands of man. To these solitudes of lonely beauty, they are pulled away from the din of the crowds, separated from the indifferents and casuals, into the very heart of Nature which is always potent enough to soothe the aches of Creation, comfortably console and reconcile the agitated Spirit and, in such sur-

roundings, the Sādhu temperaments are helped in their ceaseless divine searches, fully aided in their great meditative resolve by the song of the wild birds that speak of Him, the gentle soughing of the jungle breeze, which seems to hold the echo of His voice and the sweet perfume of flowers brings with it the Saviour of His boundless compassion for His vast Creation.

The early morning scenes are no less fascinating than the evening, in our beloved land of sunshine. That chosen hour, too, is universally dedicated to worship and prayer in the East where the scenes of the planetary world, in the skies, are also as deeply effective as the evenings. At certain periods, a beautiful and fascinating picture is witnessed, when Mother Earth is first awakened from the slumbers of the night by the first warm kiss of the Sun. With the first streak of dawn, the Queen of the star-world, the Moon, seems as if she sinks faintly into the arms of the mighty monarch of the sky, the Sun, and the scenes, during these fleeting moments, vividly

paint an attracting picture as if the Moon is suffused in the vault of the heaven with the delicate rosette hue of her bridal blush. This enchanting sight is only very momentary and these moments stealthily pass away on the winged feet of time.

Such age-long scenes are commonplace in the life of the East. The Hindu populations still retain great attractive fascination for the temple and the Sandhyā period. In spite of the machine-age, they both undeniably exercise strong and pervading pull on the Souls of men in the vast Hindu population of the country.

I have purposely given a little space to these two subjects because they definitely help to fill the designs in the Hindu mental pattern of Spirituality. They assume importance because they are so wide-spread and they do form valuable companions to the basic Hindu thought in the spiritual field. Modern times have certainly not been a friend of these important practices, because the early morning time, so full of health-

giving violet rays of the Sun, which was religiously used for prayers, has today been replaced by unhealthy lazy sleeps and similarly the evenings, that were assigned to devout prayers, have been replaced by clubs and cinemas.

Many criticisms are levelled today at too many temples in the land and if it is a mistake, I feel, it is one on the right side, since the experienced wise have reiterated, times out of number, that excess of everything in the world is bad and finally injurious to mankind, except true education on high human ideals of enlightenment (Vidyā Māya) and His worship and if, therefore, the temples, in numbers, can do no more than even remind you consistently of Him, it will be all to the good of mankind, in every way, in this age of forgetfulness and sin.

Before I conclude these few observations about temples, let me conduct the reader into the gallery of images that are housed in the buildings dedicated to Him.

Definite understandable confusion prevails

in the minds of so many, within and without India, to witness such a range of variety amongst the images in the temples of His many aspects. By this, I mean that the mind of the modern man is strictly tutored under very heavy guidance of material mass production articles of daily use for the comfort and need of the physical body only, more or less, on a mono-model accepted type like the motor cars, the Gillette shaving sets, quinine tablets, Eno's fruit salts and many other patent medicines and other objects of daily use, such as tooth brushes etc., that continually cover advertising columns of newspapers. This successful catering, solely for the physical body, answers fairly satisfactorily the needs of man for his material wants of his mono-model physical body.

Greatest difficulty will be experienced if we tried to lightly treat, as we do this material side of man, the thought-world of the being also on the mono-model basis, where fantastic variations of human intellect and choices are so distinctly marked.

Anyone who has made even a cursory study of the subjects as discussed today under scientific and medical researches in the psychologies of mankind, will see for himself, not only the astounding varieties but the unbelievable psychological urges that mankind presents. The oft-repeated Incarnations of His, for specific purposes of altering eras in the life-history of Creation, present such a abysmal contrast that it definitely becomes confusing to intelligently and faithfully appreciate and recognise the oneness of the great Spirit which repeatedly manifests in various guises to correctly tutor, guide and rescue mankind according to His approved plans of Creation. All the varied 'Avatārs' (manifestations of His) are influenced by the momentous need of ever-changing Creation in the evolutionary process of the world or, it may be, in answer to a single-minded powerful yearning appeal of a devotee, which becomes irresistible for Him to refuse, however fantastic that call may seem in the most unnatural circumstances, like

the great Narsinha Avatār, Which had to manifest by breaking asunder a solid stone pillar in response to an innocent child's unsullied faith which was threatened by a forced cruel pressure of rank atheism. The great devotee, Prahlād, at the tender age of five years, was persuasively forced by so many cruel ways to accept agnostic belief and give up his faith in the Almighty Father. He was finally threatened with a sword on his throat and rudely questioned in that compromised position to either give up his obstinate faith in Him at that moment or that he should show and demonstrate in fact the presence of God, failing which he would thus be ruthlessly murdered. The little big Soul defiantly turned to the atheist ruler and replied with that calm faith, which dawns only when it reaches that pure stage which produces the irresistible pull on him, that if he was asked where God did not pervade, he would have to seriously think of such a place and he continued, 'He is in me, in the sword that you hold on my throat, in you the ruler who

is doing so, in the stone pillar, even, close by and everywhere'. This was enough to flare up the full anger of the tyrant and he asked the boy pointing at the pillar, "Even in that stone pillar?" The answer in the affirmative from the child was enough to make him lose his temper completely. He commanded his servants to tie up the boy to the red-hot pillar and, then, brandishing his sword with a triumphant glee of revenge shouted, "I shall behead him on that pillar where he has seen his God". As he lifted his sword in the air with all its cruel glitter and was about to bring it down with a revengeful force, that very moment the stone pillar before him burst asunder and Narsinha appeared in the incarnation of "Wrath" itself, killed the agnostic, then and there, without any further trials or questions because He will not tolerate a devotee's heart to bleed, particularly that of a pure and innocent child. The Gospel of Narsinha is a long one and I have merely touched it here.

The Rāma Avatār, Krishna Avatār etc., pre-
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sent enough variations to confuse all ordinary intellectual capacities of men, because they definitely appeared on Earth on set programmes, different from one another, to alter distinct eras.

Rāma Avatār (incarnation) has been to establish universal righteousness of Dharma (divine laws) through a perfect monarchial aspect of the great ideal of "Rāma Rājya". Naturally, for such an aspect, the image of the Supreme Ruler must conspicuously display the highest ideal and emblems of regal aspects of feature, dress and all other signs of royalty. Being Kshatriya, He had to be armed with all conceivable armaments of a soldier King, equipped in every way and fully fitted to rule an ideal State in an ideal way, coloured throughout with a magnetic depth of Eastern Spirituality, where justice, equity and compassion guided the policy of the State through the fountain head of the monarch. It was from that high seat and pedestal, that the impressive tutoring guidance was inspired and acted from. All ideal plates in

human existence were exemplified by the God-head, faultlessly enacted throughout child's life in the family, where the earthly Mahārāni Kaushalyā and Mahārāja Dashrath were given, in the fullest measure, the privilege to enjoy the nectar of parental love, the student-portion which was an ideal plate for the teacher and taught, the filial obedience of love to the whole family, the self-imposed exile for fourteen years in the most inhospitable jungles with all the privations of discomfort that royal children could be exposed to, and this trying phase of exile was smilingly performed in an exemplary spirit of highest altruism in obedience to the parent's wishes without a trace of regrets or complaints. Then, the great battles against the intellectually powerful King of Lankā, Rāvana, were fought, where superiority of brute force and number was masterly overcome by supreme courage and faultless tactics of soldiery, terminating the inhuman arbitrary bloody anarchy and re-establishing the codes of rightful Dharma.

After having accomplished this great deed, He returned to his kingdom of Ayodhyā, where his devoted pining brother had carried on the regency, in His absence, with infinite concern of the heavy and delicate guardianship of the peoples. At the end of fourteen years, He came back to Ayodhyā to justly rule for many years and leave behind the unforgettable memories of the great “Rāma Rājya”, where Dharma shone spotlessly clean.

In mankind, individuality and varied choices can never be successfully bridged to satisfy all the modern socialist demands and programmes of equality in choices of individual tastes with a single set of idea. The devotees of Shri Rāma Chandra, like other perfect Incarnations, are entirely free to choose any particular phase only as the most appealing ideal to an individual and thus create in the mind of the devotee an unbelievably powerful pull with faith in that selected plate, isolated from the whole.

Although Rāma Avatār is primarily and

essentially a most regal monarchial manifestation of the God-head which necessarily must carry with its aspect every conceivable emblem of Royalty and glittering splendour, yet there may be found Souls, who, conscious of their meagre achievements of spiritual devotion or, may be ignorant of the correct Court etiquette through lack of experiences, may not feel bold enough to attempt to approach the Royal Throne for fear of their own incapacity to, even, remotely please the God-head monarch in competition with numerous better tutored Souls who are nurtured in closer associations of Royalties, and may preferentially choose the other plate, when He wandered in the forests, unattended by anyone save Sitā Mahārāni and Lakshmanji. Personal services during that period, the devotees believe, have better prospects of closer approach to Him with far more chances of compassionate appreciation by Him in the absence of competition of better tutored learned courtiers. This isolated plate, I know, is preferentially chosen by some

with a greater faith and pull on the Souls of men than the more brilliant splendour of the palaces of Ayodhyā. This isolated ideal is a very natural choice by some and, therefore, the choice of 'Upāsanā (chosen plate of worship) is not denied to the devotee, even when the essentially Monarchical God-head is the correct manifestation.

As a commonplace example in our daily lives on Earth, a man with many accomplishments has many friends and is admired by all, but, if one take the trouble to question these several friends of his individually with their version and reading of him, it will be found that they will all be different from one another. One would say, 'I like him most, when I hear him talking to me at the dinner table'. Another would say, 'I like him best when he is out with a gun on a shooting expedition'. Yet another would say, 'he surpasses himself sitting in his study when he is lecturing on high philosophy or Religion or even describing the life of a genius'. Another

would say, 'he is in his true element only in his family life'. Several others would point out his life on the games fields and so on. In all these phases in one life only, bits of his activities are chosen by different men according to each man's ideal and choice and they, then, think of and remember him by their own chosen ideals only.

They all possess a photograph of him, dressed in costumes most liked by individuals according to each choice and only, then, they can think of him in the warmest terms, so also, any phase of the incarnated God-head must carry in the image those emphasized marks that can be intimately liked and understood by the builder of the temple with his pet aspect of the image to focus through. It is owing to this important and practical factor in human life, that a variety of images and temples are not and cannot be on a mono-model basis and only isolated fancies can fully satisfy individual taste and urge.

There may be some to whom Shri Krishna

may appeal most and instead of the right royal robes and emblems of State, all the grandeur of regality may be replaced by only an enchanting flute, a herd of docile and affectionate cows under a shady grove of beautiful trees on the green banks of the sacred Jumnā with the Goddess Rādhikā, the personification of Love Divine with infinite feminine tenderness, Who, face to face with Him, enters that self-imposed mesmeric trance, which makes Her completely unconscious of Her physical division of Her material body from His.

In that elevated state, Her duality submerges into oneness of His and the purest nectar of Her Spirit in that elevated stage, helplessly but ecstatically, travels on the waves of the sweetest melody of divine music which, while flowing out of only a small green bit of Indian bamboo of the tropics, is potent enough to bridge the two Souls. Every note of the octave is perfect and is played by a pair of lips of Divinity Himself. Such music cannot but reach and deeply touch

the innermost recesses of life, the otherwise forbidden areas of the Soul and the Spirit.

Another aspect, according to choice, may be quite different, of a most solemn occasion. It might be on the history-making plains of Kurukshetra (the plains of Panipat). It was in this area that two epoch-making events that are destined to remain unforgettable in the lives of Hindu India, came to pass—the Great War of Mahābhārat that brought about so many calamities and the Divine message of the Holy Gitā from the God-head Himself. It was during those memorable eighteen days, that the chief actor in the greatest and the most awe-inspiring drama, the hero of the Pāndavas, Arjun, refused to be persuaded to take up arms and enter the battle arena and it was the God-head Himself Who had to dispel his misgivings in not performing the Dharma (duty) of a Kshatriya and tutored him with the highest philosophical truths of Creation, which He expounded to Arjun in a series of sublime discourses, codified in the Holy Gitā into

eighteen different chapters, touching every phase of life and satisfactorily answering all doubtful uncertainties that can assail a weak finite in this imperfect world.

After that Great War began, in which highest chivalry and heroism were displayed, many plates of different events took shape and a devotee is at liberty to choose any particular bit only out of that memorable fight and it may be of that particular day when one of the greatest and most renowned fighters, the Great Bhishma Pitāmah, put up a show of unrivalled skill and bravery.

It so happened that before he entered the battle field that particular day, he vowed that he would not come back to his headquarters alive, whatever the odds might be against him, if he failed to alter Shri Krishna's decision of not using arms Himself and merely confining His help by driving the chariot of His pet devotee Arjun. Such was the Great Bhishma's resolve. In spite of the fact that he was conscious

of the God-head and Krishna as one, Bhishma fought with such meritorious valour and skill that he was able to disable the famous war-chariot of Arjun. Shri Krishna saw the danger and at that psychological moment, while refraining the use of the sword, arrow and other known accepted armaments, picked up one of the broken wheels of the chariot and was about to use it as the Chakra (the edged wheel of destruction). When Bhishma saw this, he threw away his own weapons of fight and ran forward with a triumphant glee and was on his knees exclaiming to the God-head that his devotion to the Almighty had not deceived him and that he was convinced, then, himself that He is ever graciously compassionate to the Bhaktas and that his solemn vow had been kept in the eyes of the world, in all its purity and truth at the cost of His.

Some devotees idealise in that particular scene and the image is accordingly featured. But there are so many bits that are idealised and

fancied, that it is difficult to have a mono-ideal for mankind.

There are men who preferentially choose the motherly aspect only instead of the Great Father and, to such, the image is of the Great Goddess Durgā Who, in so many aspects, is installed and worshipped. In this also, variation of choice radically differs. Instead of the enchanting features of perfectly delicate feminine, motherly tenderness, that so many preferentially choose, the image may display the awesome picture of "Kāli", where all tender feminine features are replaced by bloody swords and lances etc., caused, no doubt, by a desperate mood of the inexhaustible feminine emotions of a mother to protect the devotee from all earthly dangers and enemies. The gentler sex is definitely the unrivalled custodian of all emotions. It is, therefore, only natural that the reaction of that softest feminine tenderness, if pressed to extremities, can revolt and the great treasure of emotions is potent enough, then, to reverse feminine tender-

nesses to the opposite extremes like a rational example of a tablet of saccharine which, if undiluted to sweetness, tastes bitter.

To some, the aspect of the awesome feature of Mahākāli appeals with much greater force than the other calmer moods and so on. The fact remains that the variety of choices must dominate all Creation eternally and however correctly mono-model experts may design ideals and aspects, the inequality in temperaments, owing to past Karmas, must inevitably pervade.

The great background of the Universal Spirit, which all life inhales its life breath from, will continue to be the fundamental conception of the Hindus particularly and the Eastern people generally. The Hindu, being a staunch believer in the transmigratory system, explains that human Soul as the most highly developed being in all Creation. Therefore, he logically argues that if the complicated and vast chapter of all life in Creation is deeply studied, even with the aid of science, it will reveal that every species design-

ed by Him carries with it, out of thousands and hundreds of thousands of faculties in life, one faculty more highly developed in each species than the rest and, therefore, evolutionary process is so carefully designed that the Soul of man has had its systematic tuition in all those many experiences of the various species. From them, the human Soul accumulates experiences of faculties and is only, then, entitled to finally appear in a human body, with the greatest marvel of Creation with him known as the human brain and intellect, which is supposed to masterly contain all the innumerable experiences of past existences.

Having once reached the stage of a human being, with an image after Himself, he is supposed, through the aid of past experiences aided by the great human intellect, to control and direct lower passions of the animal world and progress in human Spirituality with a faithful belief in the Almighty Creator, and these two elevated virtues are almost absent in animal life.

If these two supreme human qualities do not truly differentiate men from the lower Creation what else does, since hunger, sleep, rest etc., are not only shared by all life but are better enjoyed by them without the aid of aspirins and soda-mints etc.?

Other aspects, in images like Ganeshji and Hanumānji and so many more, are all manifestations of His great specialised Spirit conveniently used by Him as most suitable vehicles of selected faculties. Shri Ganeshji, for instance, whose worship the Hindus perform before all else in family lives, is the personification, symbolised of the highest accumulated wisdom, by the physical size of the head which contains the brain. We hear of accidents in all animal life including the wise man, intensely multiplied today by use of fast modes of mechanical loco-motion but it is seldom, if ever, one sees or hears of the elephant taking a false step, simply because he is so wise and farsighted that, even, with the abnormally heavy body to carry through difficult bits of

countries, he feels with his trunk and makes sure of every step of the solid ground that he treads on. If man merely thinks of this great farsighted wisdom, it is enough to vouchsafe success of all his undertakings in life. No better physical shape or image is provided by Nature than the lines and actions of the mighty elephant, as a symbolic reservoir of wisdom.

Although these are the symbolic reasons, the Almighty makes in His so many designs in Creation other suitable aspects to carry out His wished plans. Each aspect has its complete logical philosophy and well reasoned natural history and anyone, who wishes to study this seemingly complicated Hindu thought, should better study the origin and reasons in the Scriptures before condemning it. Thus, the all-pervading Universal Spirit, with its many and varied manifestations, is read with reasoned logic by the Hindu to help him forward on the great human plane of spiritual advance, logically catering for all conceivable variety of intellect and choices.

The freedom of thought and aspect has never been denied to the Hindu in the vast volume of Scriptures and naturally, therefore, mono-model images cannot be successful to help mankind to maintain an appreciative and intelligent faith in Him with the inevitable variety and choice in the huge human family.

CHAPTER XVII

EPILOGUE

Some commonplace misunderstood items and the very brief outline of the fundamentals have been touched by me in these pages. I know and fully realise that there are so many more points of importance that cry for elucidation to make this little book worth its while and be of some help in being of a comprehensive outlook on this vast and so well tried Sanātan culture. But, of that, I feel sure that those who really wish to satisfy themselves on any misunderstood points of ambiguity, they have only to consult the Scriptures or, better still, to get really good and honest teachers to intelligently and elucidatively explain to them the subtle and truthful thoughts that pervade through these oldest cultural beliefs. As I have said before, I reiterate to say that no important phase, in man's

life, animal and bird life, has been missed or ignored by the great Maharsis.

All minute details species-wise and their relations *inter se* to other life on Earth have been researched and explained but what is most important in man's life has been masterly explained, I refer to the spiritual side of man, his undying Soul on Earth and beyond.

Of one thing I am absolutely positive, and that is that none may go away thirsting for satisfactory logical reasons from the shores of this gigantic sweet-water-ocean of Sanātan religious culture.

In the unaccountable number of years, millions and millions have had their Souls' thirst quenched through the unbroken chain of transmigrations and will continue to do so in future too and, as the ceaseless time rolls on, millions and billions will come again and again to the comforting shores of this reservoir of highest Spirituality, as their past migrations of mankind have done.

The Sanātan belief is eternal. It is the staunchest faith in the all-guiding Providence wielded by God, the Creator and Master of this Universe, in which our conceivable Creation is only a mere residue. The whole Universe is willed by Him to follow His wishful designs. His overwhelming and all-pervading Spirit is alert and watching us with the Fatherly concern, where bitter pills and sweet potions are daily administered to keep the Soul in condition, virile and healthy.

Remember with faith, that the world of ours is no accident, it is His own designed Creation. Modern wave of thought is never tired of rubbing into us the sanction of uncontrolled independence of action, uninfluenced by any higher sanctions of Religion by individuals and peoples, falsely satisfied and contented in the belief that rational material laws, that primarily cater for the material aspect of Creation, are enough to provide all that man may require, including the wants of the Spirit and Soul of man, which is de-

signed to outlive all material manifestations of today and tomorrow. The many inventions of machines, daily new discoveries in the material medical world, all this great attempt is made with an undivided single hope to momentarily amuse short spans of Soul's travels in the everchanging material bodies that so easily disintegrate by the mysterious process of physical deaths.

During these short-lived earthly dramas, what fuss mankind displays in the booking of railway journeys that last only hours and days perhaps, with minute listed details of the tooth brush etc., to ensure against inconveniences and discomforts of the perishable physical bodies. In comparison, how little time is given today to adequately provide for the inevitable unknown journeys of the Soul of man through Religious Spirituality with a glaring handicap, compared to the material railway journeys, of not knowing the detraining terminus in life's journey, where the Angelic station-master unexpectedly appears

to demand and announce the journey's end in each span. When that inevitable end comes, how many travellers in modern life thoughtingly provide for the comforts and wants of the Soul of man.

We all appreciate, what painful discomforts we have to face by carelessly forgetting a box or two of essentials to our bodily comforts. What agonies the real man, his Soul, must go through, in forgetting quantities of essentials, can be best judged by thinking and speculative readers, when we know that man is so busy today with transitory material wants that he has no time to spend for the valuable Religious Spirituality for the real service and comfort of the undying Soul.

To correctly balance this irresponsible thought, we have only to look judicially at man with all his weaknesses and faults and quickly come to right conclusions that the supposed mighty man can really do so little and that, too, through His habitual patient compassions. This

is an unspiritual age of fallen morals and irreligious beliefs and whatever the modern teachers may try to convince you of to attain shortlived vain modern glory, do not forget that all the paths in life of highest supposed transitory glory of modern pursuits to material ends only lead but to the grave and this fact is not a skilful poetic phrase but a grim reality and what answers have you, to unconsidered irresponsible wrong Karmas, for Him.

Unthinkable time has passed over this globe of ours with cycles of distinct periods in the passage of evolutionary process with the endless chain of nights and days and His World goes on unaffected by the biggest material and mental upheavals of mankind in the usual way, guided all along with His sanctioned laws, unaltered.

After each recurring sunset, the still night stands, today, as it did when Creation first came into being, at your door, like a pilgrim of Eternity. The picturesque stars, in the limitless canopy above us, keep on brilliantly gazing

through countless death-scenes, noting all short-lived successes and failures of individuals and peoples to correctly fill up the pattern of His willed design in that mysterious method, the vivid understanding of which we have failed to discover after ceaseless researches through the unthinkable time that the world has been in existence. It is this very secret of His fathomless Māyā which keeps secretly curtained His final decision in the lives of individuals and peoples which leaves the minds of all thinking men paralysed with sheer enchantment.

The Hindu ideal of never losing sight of the essence of Creation, the undying Soul, has outlived all transitory doctrines and has never lost sight of the fact that, behind all material activities, the Spirit of the Soul is the final locus.

In all his cultural researches, he is convinced that it is His pure spark of life in the Soul of man and the rest of living Creation which is the beginning and the end of all and, therefore, the

entire field of Hindu thought has been constantly focussed on Spirituality and, without doubt, it will continue to be so in the days to come.

The vital paths of Karma, Upāsanā and Gyāna have been referred to, because they constitute the entire spiritual field, round which the vast Hindu Religion is spun into a captivating and convincing pattern of the Sanātan Dharma. Other subjects touched are only those relevant items which elucidate the major heads or are of a controversial type, misconstrued and disfigured by many, within and without the country, who are ignorant of the subject. I cannot say that the list of such subjects is, in any way, complete, as indeed it could not be in this small space, but some commonplace deceptive arguments may find answers to them. Other questions will arise in the minds of the readers and I am certain that good teachers will be found to answer them satisfactorily, provided you have the patience and unbiassed will to enquire.

The Sanātan beliefs, I can boldly claim, are

truly liberal because, all along their satisfying discourses, they are peculiarly free from narrow dogmas, finally asserting that all Religions are true that can take mankind to Him and His close associations. Sanātan Indian's consistent effort, in his very long and painstaking researches, has been to catch the reality that lies behind the appearance of objectives and, even in the material arts, the same thought guides his imaginations as he has applied to the world-renowned highest known philosophies of this great Religion. The World, as perceived by unreliable senses, is unreal and, therefore, of a transitory alterable nature. It is the veil of His Māyā behind which reality lies hidden and can only be approached for a clear and comprehensive understanding through the Spirit and Spirituality alone.

The great exponents and teachers have never exhibited a wish to copy what they have seen with their outward material eyes. They have deeply meditated upon each of the subjects

and, then, have formed their own spiritual pictures in which form and colour was given to that which was created in their spiritual minds. Therefore, it is only natural in this material age that novices and sight-seers find the Sanātan cultural picture complicated and unintelligible, when we know that attempts are made today to read and understand those priceless subtle religious thoughts with callous material glasses only.

This confused vision of their understanding does not apply to the Scriptures only but to physical arts also, because the painters and sculptors have given expression, in physical form and colour, to that which the great thinkers have forcefully and artistically clothed in beautiful words. As an instance, the old Indian pictures of the tiger in the jungles which are drawn out of proportion, with the head of the tiger far bigger than the natural proportionate size, the canines abnormally large, the arms, paws and the claws dangerously threatening and oversized, all these

abnormalities are deliberately drawn, not because the sense of proportion is so poor that correct sizes could not be drawn by artists, but because man's deep interest in the tiger centres round the animal's ferocious habits and his great destructive capacities. The great majority of men, barring a very few natural scientists, are not bothered with so many details in the tiger and, therefore, only those features, that interest and are of value to man, are drawn by the artists to convey to the judging eye that he is interested in, and can make use of, artistic exaggeration for his real benefit and intelligent understanding, to be able to appreciate the artist's message through his picture. Again, when feminine delicacy is artistically pictured, the artist can have three choices in his drawings, for the love of bodily figure, for features of the face or for temperaments of altruistic value, the spiritual side of the lady. If the figure is the ideal, the artist, sometimes, draws an unnatural thin waist out of all proportions to the rest of the figure, not because the

artists in India did not see the defective proportions but because the artist, who was enamoured of the delicate build of the body, was himself most impressed with the thinness of the waist. Other parts of the face may, in the same way, be exaggerated and so on.

So the Indian thought in the spiritual and also material field has always been deeply influenced by a strong belief that the true value of the artist lies, in fact, to what extent he can reveal his own Soul's reading and, with that reading of his, infect others with the same emotional waves that stirred his Spirit into high realms of artistry. Even in the sublime truths of Religions, the Great Teachers have recognised this and they have always considered that the real art in codifying Religions and their truths can be valued only in relation to the need of experiences they are capable of transmitting into the students' minds. High spiritual art flourishes only in healthy societies, where peoples have not stopped their ears and closed their hearts to the voice of

Religions. Therefore, all the enthusiastic overflows of the Indian artists' imaginative hearts into fantastic exaggerations are not violations as people outside India think it to be, but expressions of real ethical art.

Even, in the images of worship, high ethical art is displayed to satisfy the religious imagery, such as the image of the dancing Shiva, the "Nat Rāj", which is the embodiment of motion, existence and destruction and the embodiment of the three, so masterly put into one image, displays the artistic human reservoir and may be summed up as the last word to pacify the artistic Soul's appetite in Indian eyes which is not appreciated outside. More examples can be added and the Indian artists claim that the appreciation of art is predominantly subjective, dependent entirely upon the qualities of the beholder and transferred to the object he focusses on, like a good Indian musician who can truly see the picture of his music in colour on paper.

Music of all countries and peoples is definite-

ly a cultural art; man derives immeasurable joys from it. Apart from this, theistic mankind has always taken the aid of this to decorate prayer messages in melodious tunes with a firm belief that He listens more readily to decorated musical prayers.

Like the effect of colour, music provides real food for the Soul and Spirit. The pleasures derived from it are akin to the joys of poetry, landscape scenery, human dealings between man and man, where faithful ties of affection are relished by the Spirit of the Soul. Although such spiritual waves cannot be touched, weighed or measured by any material tapes of rational vision, yet the heart and intellect is imperceptibly influenced and, then, they play a great part in the vast spiritual field, where sentiment and emotions so deeply influence the impressionable domain of frail human units.

If one attempted to describe music on material paper, I feel one cannot do justice to it and, therefore, the nearest to its pictorial description

would be to say that it is human Soul's uncontrolled, joyful and, even, rupturous expression through the medium of sound. This emotional and comforting overflow of the Soul is a great divine gift to man for which music-lovers can never thank Him enough. The very fact of its appreciation acts like a healing balm to the countless miseries of the Soul in this imperfect world, where the anxiety-riddled Spirit submerges itself in a sea of deep joy and can even presumptuously aim at sublime Moksha and get into tune with Him.

Like so many achievements of those great Maharshis, the scientific harmonising and the rhythmical manipulations of the seven notes of the octave of music have been superbly accomplished. The well-known Sām Veda has masterly developed this great science of music to real fine art. Its great sister-volume of Āyurveda, that deals so exhaustively with life, has not missed its due share to potentially aid the existence of life of man more satisfactorily from health

point of view. So many causes powerfully influence life in Creation, such as the planets that vary in their intensities according to their perpetually changing positions and are further influenced by the six seasons in the year, the food we consume, the medicines, colours and sounds that are carried into the being through physical ears to the musical centre of intelligence. All these imperceptibly influence the elaborate and important master mechanism of the nerves for or against the being. The truth is that the tropical rays of the sun in India and the East powerfully affect life under the colourful brilliance of the actinic rays and, therefore, the entire nervous system becomes more sensitive and responsive.

This great organisation of the material body can truly be termed as the reserve bank of life, a real pillar of stability that helps life magnificently through all the dark periods of stress and storm of innumerable illnesses, strains, overwork etc. This precious discovery of immense aid, which the nervous system continually renders to

life, was a master achievement and opened a wide vista of great value to aid life on Earth. The great researchers, then, went deep into the subject and prepared a searching list of all causes that affect this priceless government of the physical body. After having laboriously compiled this list, they finally concluded that a calm, healthy and strong set of nerves was essentially necessary for all life's undertakings and that weak, passionately disturbed nerves would be the fatal rock on which life would always flounder. This danger was more emphasized in tropical countries.

Since music is indispensable to human life and, therefore, must continue to live with life, they had to overcome a great danger of modifying the emotional impacts that music invariably imparts on to mankind. They, therefore, made a deeper study of the habits of this nervous system as to when it rests, sleeps and awakes, during the hours of the day and night and also how it is affected during the different seasons of the year.

It was only after such a minute research that they composed the six principal Rāgas and thirty-six Rāginis and these, then, contain the Encyclopædia of the Hindu music. All mixtures of these principals were accepted as *Dhunis* (light tunes that are not strictly guided by classics) for momentary amusements.

Their unparalleled achievement in the composition of these melodious classical tunes lay in the fact that they masterly synchronised these tunes to the greatest benefit of the essential nervous system, avoiding all rude shocks and jarring influences or undue emotional excitements when the nerves were not prepared to cope with the volume of emotional waves that music sends vibrating through this great and important system.

Finally they made an uncanny bold declaration that a man with strong composed nerves cannot be assailed by disease and, even if one was a victim of any painful disease, that melodious musical tunes, as prescribed by the Great

Teachers, will alone be potent enough to vitalise this indispensable nervous system to a point when disease would be thrown out of the body, provided the musician was a master of this divine art.

The passionate modern film music of today is totally unrelated to the music I have talked about. This modern music merely excites passions and, therefore, in the long run shortens life-span entirely opposed to the classical music that befriends and prolongs life-span for man's greatest good.

The composition of music, as we know it, is the notes of the octave and rhythm, more or less like a living man who has his material body and his Spirit and Soul combined. The body is definitely of secondary importance as compared to the Soul, so also in true music, the rhythm is of little value compared to the musical notes.

Today, like all life is pursuing the material ends and ignoring the Spiritual, the modern base so-called music is also adopting the same proce-

dure; hence this terrible chaos in the musical world, like film music and jazz music. The effect of such noise in the name of music is a misnomer.

The fact will always remain dominant in human nature that all peoples have traditions and forms of growth, which have roots deep in their cultural and religious histories. One outstanding fact to many of us, in this country, is abundantly clear and that is that the Spiritual Sanātan realisations are definitely beyond the reach of all material mechanical instruments, so commonly used to measure the modern activities of mankind and are safely enshrined in the edifice of Eternity with truths as guards to stand beside them for all times. Only the universal Spirit of the Soul can know it and when our Great Teachers with their uplifted Souls saw them in their mental eyes, those subtle experiences were pictured with their mighty pens in our holy Scriptures as undying monuments to Sanātan glory. The fundamentals have remained

unaltered up to now and will remain so in future.

These brief arguments are some of the ideals of India and the East and all ideals can be safely described as fascinating attractive horizons. Men see them and are agitated in a hope to live in them for the real peaceful joy and happiness of the Soul for here and hereafter.

Remember, the miseries of peoples are caused not by particular individuals but wrong systems and societies. We should all try and understand that *no material care, however mechanically correct, could at any time truly atone for the deep moral suffering of the pure Soul of man.* Our single-minded effort should be to laboriously separate the true Self from the turbulent waves of lower passions.

It is impossible for men to think even that they can approach truth and at the same time continue to participate in activities that corrupt societies and, therefore, we should devote our energies to the ordering of the inner Self

in our lives much more than in indulging and aping cheap modern styles and ways of living.

I hope, in these few chapters and pages, I have been able to mentally take the reader with me, even though momentarily, through the parade-ground of Karma, the mental fortress of Gyāna and the captivating and comforting home of Love with a live consciousness of His ever present and pervading Spirit in this world of ours, where the Spirit and Soul of the being has been ceaselessly travelling through the endless wheel of transmigrations in a hope to reach so many and varied ideals and aims on the limitless road of time.

During this rapid travel, I hope the reader has had a glimpse into the subtle Eastern temperament and the Hindu mind in particular, and that some logical light has been thrown on the deep concern the Hindus have over the caste system and the reverence for the Cow and the Ganges and why the Image is indispensable in

the imaged Creation. While touching these subjects I have tried to open the logical, philosophical, sentimental and emotional door of the sacred Temples, so that the critical eye of mankind may appreciatively understand the mystery of the worship of those deep-seated human ideals that are physically personified into Incarnations and, then the selected plates of Images to focus through to the Almighty Father and Creator, Whose faithful realisation should always be Humanity's final aim.

All said and done, life after all is a strange conundrum in Creation, as no one wants to cut off its transitory connections on Earth due to so many recurring and painful failures and unfulfilled ideal dreams and yet no one seems to be entirely satisfied.

The indents of wants in the being seem to be as perpetual as life itself. The lust of greedy earthly ambitions daily grows with the being's consistent attempts to satisfy them and, therefore, by this method, the results achieved

are that there seems no question of their satiety.

In this unspiritual age, the material outlook in life encourages in an unbelievable way to keep up the list of demands of the utmost lustful extravagance that are naturally difficult of fulfilment, thus pushing the Soul of the man in an atmosphere of perpetual discontentment.

The misery of never-comfortably-satisfied life on Earth can be comparatively conceived, when we realise the truth that the Soul has been cast into the imperfect world from its elevated, faultless parental Soul of perfect blissfulness.

Karmas and Samskāras, according to His sanctioned laws, perpetually function in the horoscope of life. In this age, so many wrong Karmas are so easily accumulated and, then, the tardy vengeance of Fate ruthlessly retaliates, drowning so many fond hopes and ambitions of man today.

The material machine-age is breathlessly multiplying newest inventions of the thermo-

meters, barometers etc., but is callously ignoring the dire need of a meter for the Soul and Spirit, thus multiplying mental miseries.

In this overwhelmingly pervading material age, I very much hope that some readers at least will get a temporary respite in the domain of Spirituality, which I have talked such a lot about in this book and which the East has perpetually so highly valued above all else.

I have come to the end of these few discussions inadequately, I admit, but with the sincere hope of throwing even a faint glimmer of light on to those incomparable treasures of Sanātan beliefs, without which the indispensable and the most important human side of Spirituality cannot profitably survive and this, I believe, will be an universal loss. I have not indulged before in the art of writing and, owing to my own occupied life, I shall have little time to spare in attempting to write again, so I shall now bid a farewell to the reader and thank him for giving so much time to this crude attempt of mine in

this little book. Some who know me will almost hear my voice through the letters and, to the others, I shall remain a stranger as I have been up to now, but I hope both will tolerate the shortcomings of the language and thoughts of a novice who has attempted to address his own species of the one human family and read these pages with a compassionate understanding forgiveness to one of their own kind. I pray and hope that the modern student will find something in these few observations which will interest him and turn his searching mind, once again, towards his own door of priceless treasures. It is all a legitimate legacy, affectionately left over by our own illustrious ancestry in the eternal Sanātan beliefs.

As I wind these pages up with my feeble attempts, I feel I have only just touched the very outline of that vast structure which cannot be summed up in the few pages allotted to this important subject. Along with this, it is necessary that, when an attempt is to be made on such an important subject, the knowledge of the writer

should be scholarly with an illuminating pen. The lack of both is sadly visible in these few pages. And these facts depress me as I read over the lines again in an attempt to discover something for my own satisfaction from these whimperings of mine about such a serious and important subject, codified with such masterly skill, wisdom and truths by those super-elevated Souls of revered memory, the Great Maharshis; and the sole and the only silver lining to this depressing heavy cloud of uncertainty in conveying something of interest and value to the readers remains in the thought that I have sincerely tried with my unquestioned limitations to honestly help my own species, irrespective of caste, creed and colour, as a human family, children of one Great Father and Creator, to modify the future aims of mankind for a better existence, for a more noble and higher thought-plane of socio-religious faith and programme instead of the ideals of the Soulless mass production of cold materialisms which cannot keep

alive the warm human heart of man. If my purpose is sincere, my feeble labours may be fruitful and I shall, then, be amply rewarded.

Religion in my eyes weighs heaviest of all man's possessions for here and hereafter. This is how I have been compelled by intelligence and experiences to realise, not only for me but for man, the elevated position of the human being, the world over. I honestly believe that irreligious Godlessness will be found to be the greatest and the most conspicuous and outstanding reason for all Cultural Sterility. I have set down, as dispassionately as I could, some of my observations of the priceless religious faith which alone gives one theistic base to approach and know Him. Since I am so deeply biassed in favour of Religions, I own I have not so dispassionately written the conclusions I have drawn from the knowledge of religious faith in contrast to material irreligiousness.

I have said no disrespectful or, even, an unkind word to any religious belief of man in any

part of the globe, but I have, I know, been a severe critic of irreligious callous machine-age which has whole-heartedly attempted to rob humanity of its greatest treasure of theistic faith in the Almighty, Whose children in Creation we all are, and the scarcity of our faith in Him, through any Codes of Religious laws, has threateningly multiplied our mental miseries. If this consideration does not justify my strong critical opposition to the machine-age divorced from Religious Spirituality, I will crave the pardon of the material-minded. I felt when I wrote, as I feel today, that half-hearted resistance would have been a token one only, thoroughly inefficient for my great goal to recapture faith in Him which is always going to be man's greatest prize. Finally I wish to add that there can never be compromises on fundamentals of religious faith for any so-called needs of the times for the sake of the machine-age's revolving programmes and aims just because it will compromise the Almighty's just position in the human intelligence and un-

derstanding for man's precious and fruitful Faith.

The above written words may interest some from knowledge point of view, some from the point of view of Religion, which is Soul's greatest and the most valuable treasure, and some as a silly idiosyncrasy only, because there seems to be no room for the Religious Spiritual need in life where the material programmes of today occupy the whole time in spans of lives and, to such, it will at least amuse to read about such a silly subject as the spiritual side of man. For them, Religion and Spirituality have already been put into safes with double locks and will remain so to the end of the span of lives, what awaits them at the inevitable end of each span, they do not know and just do not care.

Some fortunates, who have tasted the sweetness and purity of Religion, are indeed lucky and I, for one, ardently hope that many more will be added to that conspicuous list as time passes and recurring failures further depress and confuse

mankind until the moment when finally the plate armour of modern prejudices of this mechanical age is pierced through with sharp-edged religious truths for the prized mental peace and plenty of mankind. I deplore the thought that young lives should be dosed with fruitless modern anxieties with the multiplying new mechanical devices which further confuse the spiritual side of man, on the one hand, and the disappearing peace-giving Religions, moralities, sincerities, on the other, because their future will be bereft of happy illusions, bereft of fantastic dreams of peaceful joys, if left ignorant of the right religious tuitions in this otherwise world of tears.

In the atmosphere of increasing difficulties in the world of today, nothing can heal and satisfy the great Spirit but Religious Spirituality and, from this alone will descend the comforting optimistic hope and real faith in His boundless compassion, which will encourage mankind to stick to human duties for the greatness of His species.

Under the present atmosphere, distracted Souls, torn with anxious uncertainties, can ill afford to apply themselves to any serious duties, designed for him by the Almighty Father. Anxiously heavy and bewildering thoughts can never console or help the lonely Soul of man in his travels through life of ceaseless transmigrations, and to hear the involuntary depressing sighs escape young lips, as if the burden on the heart is more than they can bear, is full of sadness to me.

Religion and Religion alone, in any true form, will always be the optimistic companion, is the true and oft-repeated Sanātan cry. Hear it and benefit by it. Clean faith in Him will alone help you, like nothing else will. Beware of the cheap modern crowd which is wayward as a child, fickle as a flirt. It is eternally an illusive entity and will be ever ready to disintegrate from beneath your very feet at a moment's notice. Nothing lasts for ever in this transitory world, nothing wins out in the end, except Him

and His pervading Spirit in Creation with its list of unerasable Karmas of the undying Soul and the pervading forces of that divine mystery, called Love, on Earth and beyond, that are willed by Him to be everlasting and eternal, without a beginning or an end.

GLOSSARY

Ajodhyā (Ayodhya) - - - A holy city on the bank of the river Saryu, one of the 12 Ganges of India where the Incarnation of Rāma was manifested.

Akbar the Great - - - The greatest Moghul Emperor who ruled India in the 16th century.

Arjun - - - - - A great devotee of Lord Krishna and the principal actor in the great drama of Mahābhārata for whose sake the holy Gītā was compassionately expounded by the God-Head Lord Krishna himself.

Ātmā (Chaitanya Ātmā) - Intellectual Spirit ; Soul as manifested in Creation and journey of life with its discriminating faculties ; live and intelligent Soul.

Avidyā Māyā - - - - Delusive power which is the outcome of ignorance, symbolically represented as a woman ; superfluous, cheap and lowering knowledge.

Āyurveda - - - - - Exposition of medical science which deals exclusively with the great mystery of life.

Bādrāyana - - - - - A great Hindu sage, who expounded one of the six Hindu systems of Philosophy,—the composer of the Vedanta Sutra, the mental and practical philosophy of the Hindus.

Bhakti - - - - - Love ; Devotion.

Bhakti-Mārg - - - - - The path of Love or Devotion.

Bhishma Pitāmah - - - He was a great hero in the wars of the Mahābhārata.

Birbal - - - - - One of the nine ministers of Akbar the Great. He is known for his great intellectual capacities as a practical administrator.

Brahmā - - - - - One of the three ministerial faculties of the Great Father personified in Brahma the Creator, the first deity of the sacred Hindu Trinity (Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Mahesha the Destroyer), to whom is entrusted the work of creating the world.

Brāhman - - - - - One of the four castes of the Hindus.

Buddhi - - - - - Reasoned intellect.

Chaitanya (Ātmā) - - - Intellectual Spirit.

Chakra - - - - - A sharp circular missile weapon, especially applied to the weapon of God-Head ; the edged wheel of destruction.

Dharma - - - - - Religion ; Divine Laws as designed by Divinity in Creation.

Durgā - - - - - A Hindu Goddess, consort of Lord Mahesha, known also as Kāli or Mahākāli.

Faqir - - - - - Saint.

Gaj - - - - - Elephant.

Ganeshji - - - - - Son of Lord Mahesha, one of the three principal ministerial faculties of God. Hindus regard Ganeshji as the God of intellect and wisdom. He, thus, holds a similar position as the Greek mythologists give to Mercury.

Ganges - - - - - A river in India. It is considered to be very sacred by the Hindus.

Gītā - - - - - The highest and truest Gospel expounded by the God-Head himself during the wars of the Mahābhārata as it affects the practical and philosophical life on earth.

Goswāmi - - - - - Goswāmi Tulsidās, the great poet and devotee of Rāma and writer of the holy Rāmāyana.

Graha - - - - - Crocodile.

Gyāna - - - - - Spiritual knowledge ; the highest development of intellect to convincingly recognise and return unto Him by winding up the cycles of birth and death with the final abode in Eternal Bliss.

Gyāna-Yoga - - - - - The attaining of emancipation through intelligence.

Gyāni - - - - - One who aims and attains true knowledge *i.e.*, Gyāna.

Hanumānji - - - - - The monkey-God, who is one of the principal characters in the Holy Rāmāyana. He personifies the highest accumulated faculty of blind love, since it is a monkey in Creation who has the quickest and unshakable faculty of love amongst all the created animals.

Hath-Yoga - - - - - The attaining of emancipation through pertinacity.

Islām - - - - - The Moslem religion.

Jāgrat - - - - - Awakened world ; world as the senses find it in Creation.

Jīva - - - - - Soul.

Jumnā - - - - - A river in India, next to the Ganges in point of sanctity.

Kāl - - - - - Time.

Kāli - - - - - A Hindu Goddess, consort of Lord Mahesha, known as Kāli or Mahākāli.

Karma - - - - - Action.

Karma-kānda - - - - - The active practical dictionary and diary of all actions ; the body of religious ceremonies commanded in the Hindu laws or established by custom ; a life dedicated to become perfect specimen of actions.

Karma-kāndi - - - - - One who adopts with faith and resolves a life of pure actions.

Karma-Yoga - - - - - The attaining of emancipation by performing acts.

Krishna - - - - - One of the Incarnations of God known as Krishna.

Krishna Avatār - - - - - The Incarnation of God-Head in Krishna.

Kshatriyas - - - - - One of the four castes of the Hindus.

Lakshmanji - - - - - Younger brother of Rāma.

Laya-Yoga - - - - - The attaining of emancipation by self-absorption.

Mahābhārata - - - - - The great Hindu Epic written by Vyās containing an account of the righteous wars displaying highest morals and chivalry between Kauravas and Pandavas.

Maharshis - - - - - The Great Hindu Teachers ; Super-human beings blessed with divine visions of truth.

Mahātmās - - - - - Great Souls.

Māyā - - - - - The transitory veil of ever-changing highly enchanting mythical scenes in Creation ; delusive power which curtains the truth from physical eye symbolically represented as a woman.

Mahā-Kāli - - - - - A Hindu Goddess, consort of Lord Mahesha.

Mahārājā Dashratha - - Father of Rāma.

Mahārāni Kaushalyā - - Mother of Rāma.

Mahā-Māyā - - - - - The supreme faculty of the Goddess of all Creation, symbolically represented as a woman.

Mahesha - - - - - One of the three principal ministerial faculties of God.

Mana - - - - - Heart ; the thought-centre of all sorts of emotions and sentiments.

Mithyā - - - - - Superfluous ; unreal ; false. "

Moksha - - - - - Liberated release of the undying Soul into the domain of Eternal Bliss ; deliverance of the Soul from transmigration and all painful bondage ; final emancipation.

Mukta - - - - - One who attains Moksha or Salvation.

Narsinha - - - - - Manifestation of God.

Narsinha Avatār - - - According to the Hindu faith, one of the Incarnations of God—half man and half lion. This uncanny aspect manifested itself to justify technically and bridge over many faculties of the evil king Hiranyakashyap (Hirnakush) that he had accumulated through great penances.

Nat-Rāj - - - - - Dancing Shiva (Mahesha), the embodiment of motion, existence and destruction.

Navdhā Bhakti - - - - - Nine stages and divisions of Love.

Neti - - - - - This is not all.

Nirmal Buddhi - - - - - Pure intellect or a faultless and sacred human conscience ; purified intellect.

Nirvāna - - - - - Freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

Pāndits - - - - - Scholars.

Prahlād - - - - - A great devotee of God whose personal Bhakti was so potent that it compelled the Almighty God-Head to manifest Himself for his protection.

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|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pralaya | - - - - - | The great wave of destruction by drowning. |
| Purāna | - - - - - | Elucidative holy history of evolution as seen through Hindu eyes to bring the mystery of Creation within the understanding of man. |
| Rādhikā | - - - - - | Beloved of Lord Krishna. |
| Rāj-Yoga | - - - - - | The attaining of emancipation through acts of complete control of Self. |
| Rāma Avatār | - - - - - | Incarnation of God in Rāma. |
| Rāma-Rājya | - - - - - | Ideal Kingship. |
| Rāmā�ana | - - - - - | The sacred Hindu book containing the history of Rāma. |
| Rāmakrishna Paramhans | - | A great devotee of God. |
| Rāmānuja | - - - - - | A great Hindu devotee scholar. |
| Rāvana | - - - - - | The powerful and intellectual king of Ceylon who was killed by Rāma for his nefarious acts. |
| Sachchidānand | - - - - - | One of the fondest names given to the Almighty. |
| Sādhus | - - - - - | Saints. |
| Sanātana | - - - - - | Eternal. |
| Samādhies | - - - - - | Union of heart, mind and body which alone gives real comforting peace to the Soul of man ; complete union of conscious and subconscious mind. |

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|--------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Samskār | - - - - - | Fate or Destiny ; the resultant effects of actions of the Soul. |
| Sanchita Karma | - - - - - | Accumulated consequential results of powerful actions of the past. |
| Sankalp and Vikalp | - - - - - | Emotions, sentiments, thoughts etc. |
| Sat-Guru | - - - - - | Real or true spiritual teacher ; one who dispels darkness. |
| Satsang | - - - - - | Good society or spiritual elevated company. |
| Shāstras | - - - - - | Authoritative religious and legal Scriptures of the Hindus. They are six in number. |
| Surdās | - - - - - | A great devotee of Lord Krishna aspect of God and a famous poet. |
| Tulsidās | - - - - - | The great poet and devotee of Rāma, the writer of the Holy Rāmāyana. |
| Tyāga | - - - - - | Renunciation. |
| Upāsanā | - - - - - | Devotion ; Love ; The path of Love for the approach of man to Almighty. |
| Vaishya | - - - - - | One of the four castes of the Hindus. |
| Vedas | - - - - - | The principal Hindu Scriptures. |
| Vedānta Gyāni | - - - - - | One versed in the intellectual philosophy of the principal path of Gyāna <i>i.e.</i> , wisdom. |

Vedānta Sutra - - - - Aphorisms on Hindu philosophy for the liberation of Souls.

Vidyā and Avidyā Māyā The true elevating knowledge and the superfluous, cheap and lowering knowledge.

Vinayapatrikā - - - - A poetical work of highest devotion and humble prayers in the form of personal letters written by Goswami Tulsidāsji.

Virāta - - - - - The entire Universe as manifested in Creation with skies, stars, planets and the world.

Vishnu - - - - - One of the three aspects of the God-Head.

Vishnu Purāna - - - - One of the eighteen Purans, the religious works of the Hindus.

Yato-Dharmas-Tato-Jayah Victory follows Religion ; Whoever is rightly counselled and obeys the commands of Dharma will win over all failures and problems in the life-struggle of Creation ; "Where there is righteousness, there is victory."

Yoga - - - - - Exercise to unite human Soul with the Universal Soul.



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